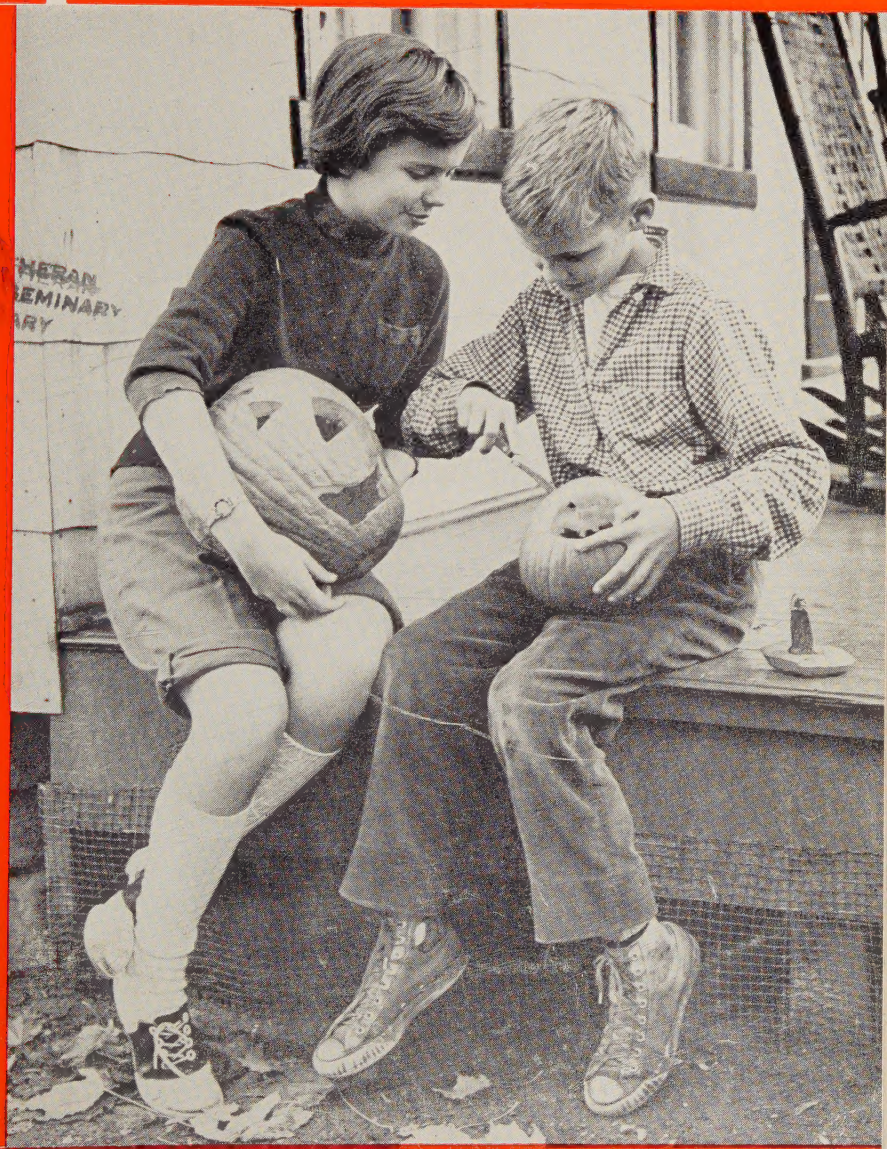


2034

THE LUTHER LEAGUE OF AMERICA

High Ideals



Do you have a PEN PAL?

During the summer one of the girls who is listed below wrote us about this letter about pen pals:

I like to write letters to other teen-agers in different states, and I hope I will see some of my pen pals at KU. One pen pal from Strasburg, Ohio, is going to the national convention, and so am I. I think it is really an experience to be able to actually meet your pen pal.

PATRICIA DIAMOND. 320 First Avenue, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania. Interests: Luther League, roller skating, sports, and swimming. Hobbies: pen pals and collecting post cards. Central Lutheran Church. Age 16.

NANCY HERRON. 625 South Street, Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania. Interests: Accordion, ice skating, dancing, swimming, and fishing. Hobbies: stamp collecting. Age 13.

LINDA C. KLING. 515 N. Collington Avenue, Baltimore 5, Maryland. Interests: choir, Luther League, painting and drawing, baseball, football, basketball, traveling, school, and scientific experiments. Member of Bethany Lutheran Church.

See the next issue for pen pal ideas.

cover photo by W. Henry Boller

High Ideals

October, November, December 1957

BIBLE STUDY

Are you a Bible Minute Man?	8	vincent edwards
(see also Christmas topic, page 36.)		

FIVE-POINT PROGRAM

Vigorous Youth (Evangelism)	5	mrs. robert b. baker
We Must Run (Missions 4)	28	john schmidt

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS

Sweet Shop Strategy	2	arline rude
A Place for Everyone	13	betty westrom
		albert a. zimmer

SEASONAL

The Trick Is to Treat (UNICEF)	10	
Martin Luther's Trial	25	betty swinehart
One in Ten (Thanksgiving)	32	elizabeth j. miller
"This Is Your Life" Ruth (Christmas)	36	mrs. george nesbitt
He Served God (St. Francis—Christmas)	40	dave ullery
Christmas Lights	45	mrs. william martin

ULCA AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Publications of the ULCA	20	
--------------------------------	----	--

WORSHIP

Silence in Worship	16	sally ann tschumi
Echoes	48	

VOLUME 26, NUMBER 4

ELEANOR S. DIVELY
PHILIP R. HOH
Editorial

RUTH SHAFFER
Subscriptions

HIGH IDEALS is published quarterly by the Luther League of America, official youth organization of the United Lutheran Church in America. Publication office: Kutztown Publishing Company, 241 West Main Street, Kutztown, Pennsylvania. Editorial office: 1228 Spruce St., Philadelphia 7, Penna. Prices: Single copies, 35 cents; single subscriptions, \$1.00 each per year; in clubs of 10 or more 90 cents per year. Entered as second class matter at Kutztown, Pennsylvania. Change of address should be mailed to: HIGH IDEALS, 825 Muhlenberg Building, 1228 Spruce Street, Philadelphia 7, Penna.



SWEET SHOP STRATEGY



by

Arline Rude

and

Betty Westrom

Presentation Pointers

Plan to use this topic as a skit. Props are simple. A narrator can introduce the story and end it.

Discuss the topic when you have finished. The importance of the topic depends upon Semitic conditions in your community. How are Jews treated? Why is it difficult to invite a Jew to Luther League? What tactful steps should you take in inviting him to come with you to your meeting? Is there a mission to the Jews near you? Find out more about it.

Ask your pastor for information about the Jews. See February 1957 LUTHER LIFE, page 16, "Experiment with Prejudice," and get the pamphlet, "Anti-Semitism and the Christian," from the National Lutheran Council, 327 S. LaSalle St., Chicago 4, Ill. (3c each or 25c a dozen). The following pamphlets and books can be ordered through the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 515 Madison Avenue, New York 22, N.Y.: "Prejudiced—How Do People Get that Way?" 25c; "Position of the Jews in America Today" 10c; "Your Neighbor Celebrates" (Jewish holidays) 15c; "The Great Dogpatch Mystery" 10c or 100 for \$8.00; "The Town that Whispers" 5c; "Mission Accomplished" (playlet) 10c; and "The Toymaker" 25c.

"YOU heading home, Sal? Wait a minute, and I'll walk with you." Anne deposited her books on the shelf in her locker.

"How about stopping at Barney's to see if any of the gang's around?" Sally suggested.

Some of the other girls from their gang were already at Barney's when they arrived. They could see them through the front window, standing by the magazine rack.

After a round of "Hi's," they all

crowded into one booth—the big one in the corner. Barney stood patiently awaiting their orders as they discussed the relative merits of double-dip chocolate sodas and root beer floats. The decisions made, he went to work at the fountain. Barney didn't mind if the laughter got a little noisy once in awhile. He didn't mind the braided straws and the chatter and the occasional spills. They were pretty nice kids. Fun to have around.

Silence came over the corner booth and straws were left idle in the glasses as the door swung open and Sam Abrahamson came in. The girls sighed audibly as he walked past the booth. They liked his tallness and his brunette good looks. Too bad Sam was always alone. It hadn't been too long since he transferred to Central from Midville. He was a quiet boy, but good-looking and smart. It shouldn't take him so long to get acquainted.

"I could go for him," Anne breathed. "I wish he'd ask me out sometime."

"Me, too," some of the others agreed.

Then Janie, half talking to herself, said pensively, "Isn't it too bad he's Jewish?"

"But he's a real neat guy, and he certainly can't help he's Jewish," Anne protested.

"Well," Joannie said, a little sharply, "my Dad says all Jews are alike. He warned me not to have anything to do with them."

Joannie's remark touched off a small flood of others—"They're so overbearing." "They'll get the best of you every chance they get." The girls gave voice to all the little prejudices they'd picked up at home and in school.

"Kids, I think we should be ashamed of ourselves." The firmness in Mary's voice startled the others into silence. Mary was the quiet one. She didn't often speak out like this.

"We have no right to talk this way about the Jews. We don't really *know* that these things are true. We've just heard them said so often that we begin to believe them."

"Besides," she went on, "we're all Luther Leaguers. We're supposed to be Christians! Every one of us knows that Jesus, our Savior, was a Jew. We've always been taught that Jesus died on the Cross for the sins of *all* people."

"Yes," Linda added, "remember last Sunday in Bible class, talking about the Great Commission? Jesus said, 'Go ye into all the world.' That seems to take in everybody, too."

"Uh huh," Mary said. "Pastor has always said that all people qualify as candidates for salvation, because we are all sinners in need of the grace of God."

Sally nodded. "That makes us all alike in God's sight, doesn't it?"

"But the Jews don't believe in Jesus, do they?" Janie wondered.

A discussion followed, with nobody seeming to know really what the Jews did believe.

Mary finally came up with an answer. "We know that they have not accepted Jesus as their Messiah and Savior. I wonder why, though? It must be because they haven't learned to know Him the way we have."

"Wouldn't it be grim to live without Jesus as our Savior?" asked Anne thoughtfully. "It's rough enough trying to live by the Ten Commandments, but imagine what it would be like not to have Jesus to go to when you've failed."

"Girls, why don't we invite Sam to come to League?" Linda suggested enthusiastically.

"That would be great!" several of the others agreed.

"Then if he doesn't know Jesus he would hear about Him and could learn to know Him. He'd like our pastor, too. I know he would."

"Hold it, you characters," Mary cautioned. "Do you really think Sam would come if we just asked him to Luther League out of a clear blue sky? That might go for somebody who had spent

half his life in Sunday school and had just lost the habit of going to church, but not for somebody like Sam, with no Christian background. He's never had a coke with us. He's never been asked to our homes for a record session or a popcorn party. I think it's asking pretty much to expect him to pray our prayers and accept our Savior. This is really important, so we'd better not flub."

"Well, then, how do we do it?" the others wanted to know.

"Wouldn't it be better," Mary said, "if we just concentrated first on being friends? Let's talk with him, invite him to our parties, show him that we think he's nice. Then we can begin telling him that our belief in the Savior is 'for real.' That's when the time will be right for asking him to League."

"You're right, Mary," Sally said, "and I thought of something else. We have to get the boys in on this. I suspect he won't like to have the feeling that a bunch of girls is suddenly taking him over. It should be Jim and Dave and Bill who invite him to League."

"After he gets to know us, he *may* be more interested in knowing our Savior," Anne said. "Let's remember him with our smiles."

"And in our prayers," added Sally.

Sam Abrahamson did become one of "the gang," and the boys did invite him to League. Oh, he didn't come the first time he was invited, nor the second. Sam's background made him a little shy about attending a meeting at a Christian church. But as he grew to know the Leaguers and warmed to their friendship, he wanted to know the things which made them happy. So he began coming to League. Because to him they represented Christ, he was brought into contact with the Lord of the Church. Now, because a group of Leaguers cared about what happened to him, Sam Abrahamson is a Christian—for real!

This topic is reprinted in part with permission from a pamphlet, "Sweet Shop Strategy," by the National Lutheran Council.

VIGOROUS YOUTH

Presentation Pointers

This topic has a two-way method of revealing its purpose—a brief speech and a panel discussion. It is another attempt to make the evangelism program more interesting and thought-provoking.

One of the older leaguers who is adept at public speaking may be given the first portion of the presentation. He may take the material, become familiar with it, and present its contents extemporaneously, inviting discussion at several intervals.

The panel could be seated in a semi-circle behind the speaker. After the opening remarks, panel members may proceed with the discussion. Parts should not be read.

The poem may be used either as a part of the introduction or as a call to worship. Suggested hymns are "Lord Speak to Me" (260 CYH) and "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations" (268 CYH). Psalm 24 may be read or Acts 4:13-20 may be the scripture lesson. The following prayer may be used to close the devotional service or to end the topic presentation:

"Our heavenly Father, we Thank Thee that Thou didst show us the perfect example of service to God and our fellowman by Thy life here on earth. We pray Thee to make us true servants of Thine: give us the wisdom and foresight to take advantage of all the opportunities for service which Thou dost send us. Give us a spirit of humility. Help us to bear disappointments, and may we ever be ready to give all the glory to Thee for whatever success we may have. We pray that the spirit of Christ will show us the way to win others and to tell the good news. We ask this in the name of Christ, who taught us to pray, Our Father, which art in heaven . . . Amen."

by Mrs. Robert B. Baker

Intermediates
have energy;
Give it purpose

*There's a great big task awaiting
O, Luther Leaguers for you.
And it takes us all united
Strong to dare and do.
There must be a long look upwards
Before our dreams all come true,
Till you lift up those who love you,
To the same league meeting with you.*

Vigorous youth desires activity! What a glorious circumstance when that energy is directed toward service to God and community! If the Luther League and other organizations of the Church are to reflect the true spirit and teachings of Christ and be a dynamic force for good, they must seek solutions to the problems of youth. They must recognize that an alarmingly large number of the young men and women of this nation are unchurched, and unless these young men and women are reached by the church's program, millions more of tomorrow's homes will be without the stabilizing and uplifting influence of Christianity.

It is not enough that the local league seeks to satisfy only the needs of its own members. It should aim also to share the gospel message of the well-rounded life with others in the community. The Luther League should do everything possible to mobilize the forward-looking, unselfish, social-minded young citizenry into an active, potent force for good in the community. Surely no one can win youth for Christ better than Christian youth itself.

God uses boys and girls, men and women to give His message to others every day. That is what we mean when we speak of evangelism, because evangelism is bringing the good news of God to men. We become messengers, or evangelists.

Our pastor may say it this way: "Evangelism is the witness of the believers to others, aimed to point men to Christ as Lord and Savior."

Intermediates may wonder what they can do. How can young teenagers help Christian leaguers grow spiritually?

What are ways of telling young people outside the Church about Christ? There are a lot of things that can be done by those who are wide awake to opportunities and eager to serve.

PRAY that God will give you an understanding of the work you can do in the church's evangelism program. Pray for the youth of the church and for your school friends who do not go to church.

WORK to make your Luther League fulfill its purpose of holding and winning youth for Christ. Make every program interesting and challenging. Plan socials, too, that will not only give wholesome recreation but will help you to be better Christians.

INVITE others to come to Sunday School, to church, and to Luther League. Don't give up after asking once. I have been told that 80% of sales made in the business world are made after the fifth call, but only 10% of the salesmen have the perseverance to continue this length of time. Call your friends on the telephone before league meetings to remind them to come. Make new people feel welcome and wanted so they will come again.

LIVE every day as a true witness for Jesus Christ . . . at home, at school, at play, in church. Let your faith shine through in everything that you do. Let Christ live in you and your life will attract others to Him.

Probably you still wonder why such a fuss about evangelism? Why should Lutherans bother with evangelism and why should it be a subject for leaguers? I will now introduce our panel who will show us why we must be alert to heed the call of evangelism. (*For presentation, use names of your panelists.*)

MODERATOR: We are talking about evangelism this evening. Jerry, will you begin by telling us why you think evangelism doesn't belong in the Lutheran church?

JERRY: Well, I've always thought it is a way of getting people all worked up and weepy about how bad they have been. They raise their hands and sign papers, and then they forget all about it until another campaign comes along.

SUE: But evangelism in the Lutheran Church means more than that. I'm sure the word does belong, because we call ourselves an Evangelical Lutheran Church. We are the church who brought forth the good news of faith during the reformation.

MODERATOR: Pastor, here is where you come in. What place does evangelism have in the Lutheran Church?

PASTOR: Evangelism is a very important word for us. It is important for us for the same reasons that make it important for all Christians. As Jerry has hinted, some practices and ideas have gotten tied up with it that have caused some people to shy away from it, or to say that it is not for the Lutheran church. Sometimes, too, the Lutheran church has suffered because of this turning away. Let's start with the word "evangelism" itself. It comes from two Greek words meaning "good news."

JERRY: But Pastor, didn't you say once that is what "gospel" means?

PASTOR: That is right, Jerry. "Gospel" is an Anglo-Saxon word meaning "God's story", or "good story" . . . good news! If the news is good enough you want to tell it with all the power to persuade that you have. You are so glad you just can't keep it to yourself. You know someone else will be made happy by hearing it.

MODERATOR: But what has this to do with evangelism?

PASTOR: Evangelism is the telling of the good news, the best news ever, God's good news about Jesus! This good news makes people happy and enables them to stay happy and lead happy, useful lives.

JERRY: Then that is a different idea about evangelism than what I had, isn't it?

PASTOR: Yes it is. You see there are people who have never heard of John 3:16, for instance. Will you read it Sue? There are many who have heard of it but have never really grasped what it means. It is everybody's business to get the news to everyone. And that includes us Lutherans, too.

SUE: Pastor, do you think we as Luther Leaguers should be in on this too? Or should evangelism be only for the grown-ups?

PASTOR: Why shouldn't you tell the good news too? You are never too young for it. If you had good news about anything else you wouldn't wait for the older people to pass the word around.

MODERATOR: But what can our league do?

PASTOR: You can start by using the Evangelism guide "Evangelism is your 'Big Job,'" you can go out three by three and visit other young peoples, and ask them to come and share the league meeting, and church services, to sing about and hear the gospel. The three by three I speak of will be two leaguers and the Third is Christ. We must remember we are not alone in these visits, but that Christ is always by our side. You can select several leaguers to take part in the congregation's program of evangelism. And best of all, remember that everything about a live-wire church and a live-wire league is good news—God's good news.

Order evangelism materials from LLA.

"Speak Up" and "Evangelism Is Your 'Big Job'"—10c

Evangelism worship services free.

Are You A

BIBLE MINUTE-MAN?

Presentation Pointers

Here's a quiz for you to try out on the leaguers. Give the brief introduction—then into the "timely test."

The quiz may be handled one of three ways. You may ask the questions and have individuals raise their hands to give the answer. No points will be given. A second way is to give pencils and paper to everyone and let them write the answers. Then give points according to the number they have right. The third method is to divide into several teams—five or six on a team—and let each team have a corner of the room in which to huddle. Ask each question, allowing time for the team members to discuss among themselves the possibilities. Then their answers are written on paper. The team with the most correct answers deserves the title of "Bible Minute-Men."

No matter what method you use for the test, when an answer is given, ask the person to give a little of the background or story. If no one knows the answer to a question, ask them to look for it in the Bible. Or have one person read the reference aloud.

After the "timely test," let the leaguers discover some Bible parallelisms for themselves. They may work singly or with partners. They may use the suggested Bible references or they may have their own favorite character they would like to study. Ask them to list parallels and make a brief report when the entire group meets again.

Noah (Genesis 5:28-10:32); Abraham (Genesis 11:26-25:10); Jacob (Genesis 25:21-37:35; 42:1-47:12); Moses (Exodus) Judges; Ruth; David (I Samuel 16:1-1 Kings 2:12); Jonah and other prophets; Gospels; Acts; and Paul's letters.

Don't forget to tell the leaguers to bring their Bibles to the meeting. Revised Standard Version is the best to use for a study of this type.

by Vincent Edwards

ONE of the most impressive things about the Bible is the fact that it refuses to become "dated." No one can call it an "old-fashioned" book with "old-fashioned" ideas. It's as modern and up-to-date as Boone and droodles.

Events of today are paralleled throughout the Bible. Some modern history facts are astonishingly similar to Bible incidents. It has been said that history repeats itself. This is quite evident.

To point out curious coincidences in modern history with occurrences of ancient Bible history (dating back thousands and thousands of years ago), a "timely test" has been drawn up. See how you do in answering the questions.

Each correct answer counts ten. If you score 80 or better, you have more than proved your claim to the title of a modern "Bible Minute-Man." (Answers are found on page 27.)



1. Many persons believe that, in World War II, Hitler spelled his ultimate doom by his relentless persecution of the Jews. What evidence does the Bible offer to prove that a tyrant's oppression of God's chosen people was almost certain to bring about divine retaliation?

2. Because of the general shortage of food, careful storage and rationing became necessary in most countries during



the last two world wars. In what great country, in Bible times was a system of storage and rationing introduced due to a terrible famine? Who supervised its operation?

3. After the battle of Lexington at the beginning of the American Revolution when neighbors went to get Israel Putnam, they found him plowing in a field. What man in the Bible, being called by God to become a great prophet's successor, was discovered at the same kind of farm work?

4. Today, astronomers can become greatly excited over the discovery of a new star. What learned men of the Orient once made a similar discovery in Bible times, and what did it lead to?

5. Bribe in the dictionary is described as "Any gift . . . used corruptly to influence public or official action." Unfortunately, in our modern world this goes on all the time. A man from Samaria tried to bribe Peter and John with silver. Who was he and what official action did he want from them?

6. Henry Clay has gone down in history for his celebrated saying, "Sir, I would rather be right than be President." What courageous leader of the early Christian church defined his stand with even greater words: "We must obey God rather than men"?

7. World War II familiarized the world with the "scorched earth" method of devastation which the Russians employed against Hitler's invading forces. What great judge of the Israelites used this same plan against his country's enemies in Bible times?

8. One of the greatest moments in the life of George Washington came when, at the close of the Revolutionary War, he angrily turned down a subordinate officer's suggestion that he set himself up as king of the Thirteen States. What celebrated leader of the Israelites, after winning a decisive victory over their enemies, likewise refused an invitation to rule over them?

9. Once while Abraham Lincoln was a rising young politician, he delivered a memorable speech on the state of the nation, in which he used the quotation, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." The saying struck home with all his listeners and readers. But who, in the Bible, had spoken those same words in the first place?

10. More than one circus has staged an act where a man walks into a cage full of live (but trained) beasts of the jungle. What Biblical hero emerged without a scratch when his enemies succeeded in having him thrown into a den of ferocious lions?

The

TRICK

is

to

TREAT



**U. S. COMMITTEE
FOR UNICEF**

United Nations, New York

- Many children in Brazil think the American word for truck is UNICEF.
- In 1952, 484 communities participated, contributing \$32,000; in 1956 there were 7,500 communities in the program, contributing \$750,000.
- UNICEF's aim is to help underdeveloped countries help themselves.
- \$1.00 supplies enough powdered milk to give 80 children a glass of milk every day for a week.

OCTOBER 31, 1956—in 7,500 communities from Alaska to Florida, from Hawaii to Puerto Rico, a million and a half children and young people rang doorbells, asking for the trick that would treat countless children overseas.

This is part of the story only. Long before the spooky day arrived churches, schools, civic groups, town officials, and parents planned the 1956 "Hallowe'en with a heart."

The *Trick or Treat* program of UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) belongs to the youth of America. It was started by them. They make Hallowe'en a day of *sharing* instead of *scaring*.

A UNICEF Hallowe'en is traditional with spooks, witches, and goblins; it retains all the fun of ringing doorbells, parties, apple-bobbing, and collecting of treats. The difference is that UNICEF spooks and witches are really angels in disguise. The treats they collect are pennies, nickels, and dimes for children overseas. *UNICEF good-will ambassadors share because they care.*

Presentation Pointers

Present the material as it is. Have pamphlets to hand out to the leaguers. These can be secured through the U.S. Committee for UNICEF, United Nations, New York. Suggested pamphlets are "The Trick Is to Treat", "A Little Goes a Long Way", "The Story of the UNICEF Coins", "UNICEF and YOU", "UNICEF—What It Is", and "Hi Neighbor."

The most important part of the topic comes in the planning session following the formal presentation. Decide if your league wants to take part in the UNICEF program. Make plans to contact local organizations for sponsorship. Be ready to give them reasons for taking part in the program and an outline of what your leaguers can do.

If your league is enrolled already in the program for October 31, make final plans at this meeting. Make posters for the church, announcing to members that you will be visiting them for tricks or treats.

Make plans to have films or a recreational night when you can study about other countries and participate in their games and songs.

Some Facts on UNICEF

UNICEF was organized in 1956 by the General Assembly of the United Nations. It is governed by the Executive Board of 26 nations. Unlike most UN agencies, UNICEF is not financed by assessment but by voluntary contributions, mainly from governments. Individuals and communities contribute, also, to the fund agency.

When a country feels it needs aid, it makes a request through the government.



The application is reviewed in the field and at headquarters by experts. Then it is sent to the Executive Board for decision.

UNICEF aid *is not* permanent. Its program trains others to help themselves. Assisted countries spend an average of \$2.00 for every \$1.00 put up by the Fund. Soon these countries stand on their own feet to give aid to their people.

But UNICEF results *are* permanent! It is designed to get needed action in a country started.

UNICEF's mission is to protect, to provide, to teach, and to train. The first step is to protect children against disease—the child cripples: malaria, tuberculosis, and yaws. (Research on the mosquito is an important aspect of campaigns against malaria in Iraq and 39 other countries.) Teaching and training is the second step. Mother and child care centers are set up. (Four UNICEF-equipped training centers in Pakistan are schooling nurses and other health personnel for work in rural areas.) The third step is to provide basic means of self-help. (Burmese villagers are taught how to get clean drinking water.)

Getting to Know You

The worth of UNICEF is not measured by statistics but by people. UNICEF means African children will grow up free of the ancient curse of leprosy. It means

600,000,000 children in the world suffer from malnutrition or disease.

UNICEF is the largest international agency devoted to the welfare of children and mothers.

This year UNICEF is reaching 39,500,000 children and mothers in 95 countries.

Contributions may be sent to U.S. Committee for UNICEF, United Nations, New York. The office for the United Kingdom is 14/15 Stratford Place, London W. 1, England.

the farmer in Syria can at last harvest his crop and feed his family because for the first time he is free of malaria. It means many more life-giving facts "for all the world's children."

UNICEF is developing a sense of unity among all peoples of the world. This is the key. We all need to know about each other.

UNICEF and YOU

Can your community take part? Every community can! Here is a list of things you can do. Take your choice:

1. *Trick or Treat* program for Halloween. Interest one or more groups in your community in sponsoring it. The U.S. Committee for UNICEF has prepared a kit with planning suggestions. It contains sufficient material for 25 youngsters. Cost of the kit is \$1.00.

2. *Understanding Our Neighbors*—theme of the U.S. Committee's youth recreation kit.

3. UNICEF greeting cards—bought for your own use or sold through local organizations.

4. Contributions—sent to the U.S. Committee.

5. Associate Membership in the U.S. Committee—you receive regular mailings concerning the progress of UNICEF.

6. "News of the World's Children"—goes to members and others who subscribe for \$2.00 a year (6 issues).

7. Other publications, films, and speakers—available so you can learn about the work of UNICEF and the countries who benefit from its program.

PURPOSE OF THE TOPIC:

1. Help individuals with handicaps see that they can overcome these handicaps and become one of the group.
 2. Help leaguers integrate handicapped individuals into their membership.
 3. Teach leaguers that each has handicaps he must learn to overcome.
-

A PLACE for EVERYONE

One must earn
the right
to be happy

Presentation Pointers

The topic easily is divided into three parts at the sub-titles.

For the first part, have a leaguer tell the story in the first person. Or present this as a skit. Two scenes can be set up—the home of the advisor and the league room.

Rewrite the second part as a newspaper article. Have someone read it from a newspaper. Give a fictitious name to the town in which this occurs. Parts one and two can be given as chalk talks also.

Present this section as it is. Read it several times before the meeting so you can present it without reading it to leaguers.

For discussion purposes: Name various physical handicaps and what people with those handicaps could do in league—in the community. List other handicaps individuals face. What is your community's attitude to the physically handicapped? What opportunities are there for him?

by Albert A. Zimmer

ONE Sunday evening I invited my house guest to attend our Luther League meeting. To me it was another evening of Christian fellowship with the young people of our church. To George Benson, my guest, it turned out to be a revealing experience.

Mary's Stepping Stone

During the initial recreation period, one of the members, Mary Roberts, entered the social room. Her entrance was no different this evening than it had been on previous occasions. To all but my house guest there was nothing special about Mary's coming to the meeting. But George saw Mary's crutches. He came through with the comment, "Isn't it a shame that girl is so handicapped? What fun can she have at a meeting like this?"

I smiled. "Do you really think she won't have fun? Just wait and see what happens!"

Several leaguers greeted Mary and helped her remove her coat. Within a few seconds she was over by the ping-pong table watching a "hot game." During the game the two players became so excited that they lost count of their score. This could have meant a minor argument. But Mary Roberts said, "The score is 12-7, in favor of Bill." George was amazed to find that Mary, too, had been taking part in the game.

It came time to call a halt to the recreational program. The business meeting had to get under way. As George Benson and I took our chairs at the rear of the room we observed that Mary Roberts had taken her place at the secretary's desk. She presented the minutes for the previous meeting in superb style. During the business, George experienced the clincher that made him feel how wrong he had been about Mary's handicap. The group wanted to have a skating party. Who would be responsible for planning it? It was Mary who said she would take care of all arrangements.

In a discussion period following the topic, Mary contributed many worthwhile

ideas. And during the closing social hour she continued to play an important role within the group.

On our way home, George bubbled over with enthusiasm as he spoke of Mary's participation in league activities. "I take back everything I said about her not having fun at the meeting. She's a real asset to that group!" Later he gave his wife a detailed account of Mary's participation. "Why, she even volunteered to plan a skating party," he said, "helping others have fun at something she can't do herself. You know, I forgot half the time that she was physically handicapped."

Then I asked George if he had noticed the other two handicapped youngsters in league. He said he hadn't. I told him about Doris who has a speech impediment and John who wears a brace on his back because of a childhood polio attack. "Our leaguers accept one another for what they are and what they can give," I told George.

George shook his head. "I feel sorry for myself when I realize what these young people are doing to overcome their weaknesses. They have made their handicaps into stepping stones."

Looking Down on "Specials"

Last year our local schools opened special classes for the physically and mentally handicapped. Many of the pupils in the rest of the school looked down on these students as being inferior. This was the reflection of the community as well. The attitude continued to spread as a cancerous growth in the community. Recently the local schools held an open house. This event proved to be an object lesson. The community was astonished at the handcraft and artistic skills of these so-called "special" students. Much of their art work was too superior for comparison with that of the average students.

Many teachers capitalized on this fact. Today there is an entirely different attitude toward special pupils, the average students have learned that they, too, have their weaknesses and handicaps.

Handicaps and Compensation

Each of us has his share of handicaps. Some of us may be extremely tall, short, stout, or thin. We may have dark, light, or spotty complexion. Some of us may be clumsy or awkward in walking, talking, standing, or sitting; some may have nervous movements such as twitching and jerking. Many of us may be weak and tire easily. We may have poor appetites, poor hearing, poor sight, or poor teeth.

The list could go on and on. In addition to these examples of physical weaknesses, we could list mental, social, and spiritual handicaps. No one is perfect in all things, but each has his share of corrections to make and his portion of weaknesses to overlook.

One fortunate thing for most of us is the fact that we have learned to make up for these weaknesses in various ways. Psychologists give this method a fancy name and call it compensation. We have learned to eliminate undesirable traits and in their place substitute characteristics in which we show up strong and socially acceptable. This is good because life will continue to throw blocks in our

path and we must overcome these barriers. No one will ever go through his lifetime without any problems.

I don't think we should take a fatalistic attitude concerning our handicaps or weaknesses. Rather, we must be willing to recognize them and make certain that they do not interfere with the things we can do well. For most of us handicaps can be temporary. For those with permanent handicaps, remember that they exist in our contacts with others only as long as one accentuates them. Look around and see how quickly you can forget about a person's weaknesses when he is an active participant in the group.

There is a place for every one in our way of life. One must earn the right to be happy and useful. For all of us with handicaps large or small, permanent or temporary:


1. Accept what you are and work toward what you want to be. Dilute your weaknesses and reinforce your strengths.
2. Don't accept or expect pity; the other fellow has his troubles, too.
3. With God's help no load is unbearable. In Him there is a way for all.

Mission study for 1957-58

DID YOU KNOW THAT:

- Lutherean work in Japan began in 1895, 65 missionaries are active in Japan under the Board of Foreign Missions of the U.S.A.
- The Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church organized in 1927, has 60 Japanese pastors in 66 congregations.
- Only one-half of one percent of the population of Japan is Christian.
- In Japan 80,000,000 people are towarded into an area the size of the State of California.
- Japan has the highest rate of literacy of any country in the world—97.2.
- A Lutheran Seminary in Tokyo has 45 students, preparing for the ministry, 116 contributed funds for construction of the new building.
- Nearly 250 Japanese Christians, in Lutheran Welfare organizations, help care of the aged, orphans, blind and deaf children, uneducated women.
- "Japan" is the 1957-58 theme of the Joint Commission on Missionary Education.

BOOKS AND BLOSSOMS



order from LLA headquarters

A "Do It Yourself" topic
on
the method of Quaker worship

SILENCE IN WORSHIP

Presentation Pointers

The purpose of this topic is to discover how the Quakers worship and to discuss and apply their uses of silence to our own worship and devotional life. The Quakers themselves, will probably interest the leaguers; have plenty of information on hand. But don't forget the application.

Check the library or ask your pastor for books on Quakerism. Make sure the leader has read something in addition to this article. Pamphlets (estimated cost 10c each) may be obtained from a local Friends meeting house for Pendle Hill Publications, Wallingford, Pa. Three of the best are No. 26 "The Quaker Meeting," Howard E. Collier, 1944; No. 47

"The Nature of Quakerism," Howard H. Brinton, 1949; No. 48 "The Society of Friends," Howard H. Brinton, 1949. Read this material carefully.

This topic is in radio form. You might try: (1) dividing the stage or front of the room in two by a screen. On one side the reporter stands, and the other side is the studio. Use fake microphones. (2) using regular microphones and amplifying system. This will give leaguers who are too shy to lead a topic a chance to help with one. If someone likes to draw, or you can find enough pictures, show pictures through an opaque projector and pretend this is a TV show.

After the radio program, hand out self-rating charts and pencils to each leaguer. Allow a few minutes to check these. Then go into buzz groups. Give each one a topic and necessary materials. Ask each to discuss and report back on when and how we should use silence. (1) Summarize how the Quakers use silence (pamphlets on Quakers); (2) Silence in our church worship (*Common Service Book*); (3) Silence in Sunday School devotions; (4) Silence in Luther League devotions; (5) Silence in my own devotions.

Silence In Worship. Tell the group you are going to use the principle of silence in the closing worship. There will be no music or liturgy. Arrange the chairs in rows or a circle. If you speak in a soft voice the leaguers will get the idea and there should be no giggles. Have a definite beginning and ending. "We will worship in silence after the call to worship and close with the Lord's Prayer." (Habakkuk 2:20 is a familiar call to worship.)

The leaguers are to think about God and what he has to say to them. Ask them to close their eyes if they think it will help. If anyone wishes to speak let him do so. Tell the group that you will have several people read Bible verses and tell what they mean to them. (These must be prepared in advance. Choose a few from the suggested daily Bible readings, or these: Psalm 4:4; Psalm 46:10; Job 4:16; Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7b.) Have a quiet time between explanations and Bible readings.

by Sally Ann Tschumi

WAIT - QUIETLY

STUDIO ANNOUNCER: This is your favorite radio station of the air, today presenting "Wait Quietly," the story of silence in worship.

REPORTER: Ladies and gentlemen, we are gathered on the porch of a very simple, squat building nestled on a sloping hill just off one of the major streets of suburban Baltimore. There are no bell tower or stained glass windows to remind us that this is a place of worship. This is a Quaker meeting house. The Friends, as they prefer to be called, are gathered outside in small groups. The chatter stops now as the Friends enter their meeting house. Let's go inside, too.

We're standing in the back of a large room, near the door. You'll pardon me for lowering my voice, but no one is talking and there is no organ music to hide my speaking. The room is filled with bench-like pews all facing in one direction, except for two rows up front. The men and women seated there and facing us are the elders. In front of them is a table which is used for business sessions. There is no altar, pulpit, or reading desk. Nor will there be any choir, order of worship, singing, or sermon. There will be nothing but this same silence until someone feels inspired to speak.

Even the children feel the silence. See, the people are all sitting quietly. Some have their heads bowed. Others look up, but see nothing. Their thoughts are turned to their souls and God. The primary purpose of this meeting is to wait upon God. There is no prepared program. Each person here is trying to open his heart and life to an awareness of the "Divine Life." If a worshiper feels in his heart a message which he recognizes as one not intended for himself alone, he will speak. Perhaps you would like to know a little more about this Quaker faith. We take you back to our studio. Come in, Mr. Announcer.

STUDIO ANNOUNCER: Thank you, Star Reporter. We have in our studio Mr. Quaker, Mr. Martin, Susan and John Lutheran. Mr. Quaker, do you mind if we ask you a few questions about the meeting?

MR. QUAKER: Not at all.

JOHN: Why do you call it a "meeting?"

MR. QUAKER: Because man and man meet together, and all of us meet in the presence of God. In the meeting, man thinks upward toward God and across toward his fellow worshippers. As a result, the feeling between God and man, and the relationship between people, blend and reinforce each other. They have a "meeting."

SUSAN: If no one says anything, how do you know when it begins?

MR. QUAKER: It begins long before Friends sit down in the meeting house. Our minds should come prepared to such a service. We put away our everyday concerns and interests, and collect our thoughts. That way a sense of harmony in our search for nearness to God grows while we are together.

SUSAN: That's just what our pastor says. We prepare ourselves by reading the lesson the night before. Then we should come quietly into the church and pray so that we feel God's nearness from the very beginning.

MR. QUAKER: The sense of God's presence grows because of the worshipful attitude of the group. When a Friend arises to speak a prayer or share some thoughts, we may accept such a ministry as an expression of the entire fellowship of worshippers.

JOHN: Our pastor speaks for us. I'd be afraid to get up and say something.

MR. QUAKER: We believe that the same spirit that caused the Bible to be written

is active in the minds of men and women of today. God's spirit is anxious to reveal itself to us continually. Worshipers wait in silence, trying to make themselves as open as possible to the whisperings of the still small voice of God. Anyone who gets up to speak is being used of God—speaking the words or ideas that came to him in the silence.

JOHN: Why don't you read from the Bible as we do?

MR. QUAKER: We do read the Bible, but we don't use it formally in our worship as you do. To the Quakers, the Bible is *a* word of God, but not *the* Word of God. God inspires us the same as he did the prophets and writers of old.

MR. MARTIN: You don't ever share your feelings together like we do in singing hymns, using creeds, psalms, or group prayers, do you?

MR. QUAKER: No, we don't. We feel that few people sincerely put the words of another in their own mouth. It's much better to share your feelings in the "Inward Light" as we call the Divine Presence in the midst of the worshiping group. This unites us all in the body of Christ. There is no need for spoken words.

SUSAN: I love to sing hymns; I *feel* what they mean.

JOHN: I love the Creed; I know what I stand for.

STUDIO ANNOUNCER: We can't stop to discuss that now. Let's move along. What about Sacraments?

MR. QUAKER: True worship practiced every day, sometimes alone and sometimes together, gives us strength and vision for living a life of dedication and obedience to God's laws. You can see the results in our lives. Outward sacraments are not necessary. All life is an occasion for sacramental acts.

MR. MARTIN: I noticed that your meeting houses are very plain. Does that come from the old-fashioned idea that anything colorful is sinful?

MR. QUAKER: In a way, the absence of ritualistic symbols in Quaker worship has to do with simplicity. We feel that what you symbolize is already present; therefore, the symbol is not needed. Or if that which is symbolized is not present, the symbol may become a misleading substitute. Either way, we don't need or use symbols of any kind.

MR. MARTIN: I really need symbols. When I go into church I sit quietly and look around at them. Just thinking of the wonderful truths of God they represent is a sermon for me.

STUDIO ANNOUNCER: I'm sorry folks, our time is running out and I want to return to our reporter before we go off the air. Perhaps we can continue this discussion later.

ALL: (each choose one) Yes. Sure. Be glad to. OK.

STUDIO ANNOUNCER: We take you back now to the Friends' meeting house. Come in Star Reporter.

REPORTER: The meeting has ended and the people are leaving silently. There was a very long period of silence before anyone spoke today. Just after you went back to the studio a young man got to his feet and began, "I am reminded of a story . . ." He continued with the story, then told how he thought God wanted that applied to everyday life. He made a plea for greater understanding of the countries we do not trust, and love for the people there. The silence settled back as he finished. It was not broken again until one of the elders, an older man with gray hair, stood up. He was holding a well-worn Bible open in his hands. Referring to it, he said he was moved to interpret this passage in a new way. That layman certainly could explain the Bible! Not long after that the people began to stand up and leave. They shook hands with friends, but there has been no chattering. Just respectful silence and quiet sounds of movement—no voices.

Well, that concludes our broadcast for today. This is your radio reporter signing off. We have just presented "Wait Quietly," the story of silence in worship.

SELF-RATING CHART

(Give yourself three points for Always, two for Usually, and one for Sometimes.)

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never
I pray about my conduct and understanding of the way we worship.				
I enter church quietly.				
I do not talk to my neighbor.				
I do not distract others with my actions.				
I bow my head and pray when I first sit down.				
I pray for the pastor and other worship leaders.				
I use quiet moments when I first come in or during the offering for:				
prayer				
thinking about God				
thinking about the symbols and pictures				
reading the lesson for the day				
reading psalms or prayers				
reading hymns				
memorizing parts of the Bible or Liturgy				
memorizing the catechism				
I do not talk during the offering.				
I do not begin "buzzing" during the postlude but wait until I am out of doors.				

Things to Do

1. Leaguers who like to draw may be encouraged to make a chart or series of posters showing the use of silence in worship. These could be hung in your league room or Sunday School as a reminder.
2. Make up some prayers or a prayer list to be used by leaguers before worship.
3. Decide on certain symbols or pictures in church to observe and think about each Sunday. Do some research on them.
4. Set aside a special time each week and ask the leaguers to have a "meeting" of silent prayer wherever they are at that time.
5. Visit a local Quaker meeting during a meeting.

6. Followup with a study of liturgical services or symbols in the church.

Daily Bible Readings

I Corinthians 14:28-31—*Is this how the Quakers worship?* Lamentations 3:25-28—*Seeking and waiting in silence.* Revelation 8:1-5—*Silence in heaven for prayer.* I Kings 19:9-18—*God speaks from the silence.* Isaiah 30:15a—*Silence recharges the batteries.* Job 29:21-25—*Silence shows a reverence for our leaders.* Acts 15:12—*Silence to learn from others.*





why does
publish

our church
these magazines?

PUBLICATIONS OF THE ULCA

Presentation Pointers

Here is information which Luther Leaguers should know. Five big magazines are published by our Church, aside from *Luther Life* and *HIGH IDEALS*. What's their purpose?

This material *can* get very boring, *but* use your imagination in presentation and you'll have a topic that's tops! Try to present each magazine in a different way. Some suggestions are given. Think of some more of your own.

Introduce the topic with the initial presentation in the body of this topic. You may want to ask, "What's the official publication of the ULCW? The Luther League?" etc. Then dive into the presentations.

1. Have a TV panel show called "Which magazine am I?" On a blackboard write the names of the 7 magazines (including *Luther Life* and *HIGH IDEALS*.) A contestant (who has plenty of preparation for his part) is questioned by the panel. Make the panel ask "yes" or "no" questions. The idea is for the panel to guess which magazine is represented by that person.

2. Interview a leaguer, acting as editor

of one of the magazines, on a TV program.

3. Make up commercials to be sung.

4. Dress as a cover of one of the magazines (similar to the cigarette ad). Leader asks the magazine questions.

Ask your pastor for his 1957 *Year Book*. Periodicals are listed on pages 71-73. Read the list and have the leaguers tell you with which ones they are familiar. Perhaps some leaguers can give you a little information on these other periodicals. Do you know the title of your synodical publication?

Review the topic with an old-fashioned bee. Then end up with some promotional stunts for *Luther Life* and *HIGH IDEALS*. Commercials or a short skit will be fine.

Have a display of the magazines and distribute fliers to the leaguers. Write to the various magazines for promotional material. (Be sure to use the Brotherhood address rather than the editorial office.)

This topic is not for promotional purposes. But, as a result, some of your leaguers may wish to subscribe to various magazines. If this is the case, be ready to take their subscriptions and money.

IF I were to ask you what organization is a combination of social work agencies, business firms, schools, overseas enterprises, art studios, and a whole host of other vocational terms, what would you answer? Would you have thought of the Church?

Probably not. We don't think of it in this light. But, let's face it—the United Lutheran Church in America is really on the ball! There's plenty cookin'!

Why, our Church is a publishing house practically. I paged through the 1957 *Year Book* the other day and discovered that 15 periodicals are published by the ULCA, its Boards, and auxiliaries; 11 miscellaneous periodicals are published (some in Hebrew, Hungarian, or Spanish); and 34 are published by the synods. Some of these are magazines, others booklets, and others newsheets. Some are mimeographed, others professionally printed.

I chose five publications that are magazines. They're important publications in our Church. You and I should know why they're printed. So I wrote to the editors of these five magazines and asked them for info on their publications. Here's the outcome:

The Foreign Missionary

Monthly magazine with a circulation of 15,000. Dr. Fred J. Fiedler, editor. 231 Madison Avenue, New York 16, editorial office; subscription .75 a year.

Who reads your magazine? Our subscription list includes pastors, Sunday School leaders, and many members of the United Lutheran Church Women. In reality, our magazine is for all members of the Church.

What is the purpose of your magazine? The purpose of *The Foreign Missionary* is to give information about our foreign fields. Chatty news items each month from each field, and stories of missionaries' experiences are included in the pages.

There is information about individual missionaries. We include their birthdays because many people like to remember them with cards and letters. Besides information about our own fields abroad, we often have articles about missionary work in general.

At what age level is it aimed? *The Foreign Missionary* is readable by people from intermediate age up. The "Uncle Missionary Page" each month contains a story about some missionary's experience, told simply for the benefit of children in the junior age.

In what ways can young people benefit from your magazine? Fresh news direct from the eight foreign mission fields of our Church is supplied. We believe that some people who are not interested in foreign missions feel that way because they do not know anything about the subject. Our magazine seeks to give people, especially young people, interesting information simply told.

The Lutheran

Weekly magazine with a circulation of 185,000. Dr. G. Elson Ruff, editor. 1228 Spruce Street, editorial offices; subscription \$3.50 a year.

Who reads your magazine? Readers of *The Lutheran* are, in general, members of the ULCA.

What is the purpose of your magazine? Purpose of *The Lutheran* is:

1. To provide information of significance to the Church.
2. To relate the Christian faith to the life of the people.
3. To familiarize members of the Church with Church personalities and institutions.
4. To promote the work of the ULCA.
5. To address the Church with responsible expressions about relevant purposes.

At what age level is it aimed? *The Lutheran* is aimed primarily at the adult members of the Church, but it is written in terms which make it easily understandable to teen-age members if they have developed sufficient background

knowledge to be interested in general Church activities.

In what ways can young people benefit from your magazine? There are human interest articles, articles about personal Christian experiences, and several continuing features ("Five Make a Family" and "Personal Problems Clinic"). Explanations of worship and Bible studies will mature Christian concepts. The features prove to be attractive to many teen-age readers.

Lutheran Men

Monthly magazine with a circulation of 8,834. Reeuvrend Joseph B. Mohr, editor. 3701 Avenue I, Brooklyn 10, editorial office; 231 Madison Avenue, New York 16, Brotherhood office; subscription \$1.50 a year.

Who reads your magazine? Our magazine is read by Lutheran men chiefly, especially those interested in the work of the Brotherhood.

What is the purpose of your magazine? Our purpose is to promote the work of the Brotherhood and educate men in the work of the Church. We give publicity to the activities of Brotherhoods throughout the US and Canada. We try to keep men informed about the general work of the whole Church through articles prepared by the various Boards of the Church.

At what age level is it aimed? *Lutheran Men* is aimed at adult readers.

In what ways can young people benefit from your magazine? Young people can find interest points in our magazines just as they could in other magazines not aimed specifically at youth. Dr. Eichler's column on "Boy Scouts," a monthly feature, might interest young men in Scout work. Dr. Rudisill's regular column on "Education for Living" will interest young people who seek ideas on how to improve their personalities and get along with groups of people. Some of our monthly topics might be helpful to Luther Leagues. Articles on the general work of the Church should interest those who are concerned about the business of the Church.

Lutheran Woman's Work

Monthly magazine with a circulation of 64,770. rMs. Howard R. Gold, editor. 1228 Spruce Street, Philadelphia 7, editorial offices; subscription \$1.00 a year.

Who reads your magazine? Women of the congregations of the United Lutheran Church in America, particularly those affiliated with the United Lutheran Church Women. There are many other readers, including pastors, laymen, and staff and executives of the ULCA and the National Lutheran Council.

What is the purpose of your magazine? *Lutheran Woman's Work* is the official magazine of the ULCW. Its purpose may be described as three-fold:

1. To interpret to the members of the ULCW the purpose and plan of the organization by providing organizational helps, publishing reports, etc.
2. To be one of the tools of missionary education, providing information through articles, news, pictures on ULCA fields at home and overseas, and giving guidance in the selection of programs, books, visual aids, etc.
3. To stimulate stewardship of time, talents, and funds among women of our Church. The ULCW has as a main objective, the support of missionaries and missionary operations through Boards of the ULCA.

At what age level is it aimed? *Lutheran Woman's Work* is slanted to women of 25 years and over. As of June 30, 1956, 26,679 of the 137,929 members were under 35 years of age, or approximately 19%.

In what ways can young people benefit from your magazine? *Lutheran Woman's Work* presents a great deal of human interest material that will interest young people. There are stories and pictures directly from the mission fields—portraying the missionaries and nationals at work. The magazine provides many helps in missionary education, such as reviews of mission study books, methods of presenting mission study, and devotional helps.

Parish School

Eleven issues with a circulation of 29,500. Reverend John M. Mangum, editor. 1228 Spruce Street, Philadelphia 7, editorial offices; subscription \$2.25 a year.

Who reads your magazine? *Parish School* is a magazine pertaining to Christian education. The bulk of subscribers are church school leaders and teachers. This, of course, includes more than just the Sunday School staff. It also includes people who are active in vacation church school, weekday church school, catechetical instruction, and camps. Since the home is considered the most effective educational institution, articles are aimed at parents occasionally. A few Luther League advisors and ULCW and Brotherhood leaders are among the readers.

What is the purpose of your magazine? *Parish School* is a technical magazine in the field of parish education with the purpose of stimulating and assisting leaders of parish education. Articles dealing with philosophy of education, theology as related to education and vice versa, methods of education, news in the educational field, and program helps for the educational program are contained in the magazine.

April and June issues of 1957 appealed to the youth of the Church. In the April issue there were articles about student life in our Church-related colleges and among foreign students in the U.S. The June issue had articles about deaconess work, giving a glimpse into the variety of service offered in this field.

Articles in the regular issues of the magazine should be a challenge to young people who are contemplating full time service in a Church vocation. By reading *Lutheran Woman's Work* they can become well acquainted with the missionary personnel now serving in the various fields and be able to evaluate the kinds of service needed in these fields.

At what age level is it aimed? The magazine is aimed at educational leaders and workers. Most of these people, of course, are adults. Some of them, however, are young people.

In what ways can young people benefit from your magazine? Those young people who are active in the educational field of the parish most certainly would receive help for their work. Many articles would be of assistance to Luther League officers and advisors.

Parish School is a good textbook for young people who would like to teach in church school someday.

Subscribe to

LUTHER LIFE
(your magazine)



HIGH IDEALS
(your topics manual)



send your subscription to
or
order promotional flyers from

Luther League of America
825 Muhlenberg Bldg.
1228 Spruce St.
Philadelphia 25, Pa.

by Betty Swinehart

on the spot report
from
the diet of worms

Presentation Pointers

This Reformation topic is an "on-the-spot" radio and TV program. Props will be simple to make and set up.

At the end of the play, have a discussion as part of the TV show. Go through the audience asking questions about the Reformation and Luther. Those who are to give facts will have to have their information beforehand. The rest will result from a general discussion.

You may want to make the play longer and present more facts about Luther. Facts are found in any church history book. Also, look at "This Is Your Life" in September, 1956, *Luther Life*.

MARTIN LUTHER'S TRIAL



ANNOUNCER: Ladies and gentlemen, this is your on-the-spot announcer, coming to you from Worms, Germany. It's a tense moment. The air is heavy with excitement. In the great assembly room so many people have gathered that there is scarcely space for anyone to be seated. This is truly the most important session of the Diet of Worms. This as you know, is the Council of the highest officials of Church and state in Germany. Thousands of spectators have crowded into town, for it is known that there is to be a trial of Dr. Martin Luther, the professor at Wittenberg University. Dr. Luther has been accused of speaking against the Church. Men before him have been burned at the stake for this offense. Folks, we're moving inside the big room now, our microphones are picking up all the noise and clammoring of this crowd. Here in this room there is a sudden stirring and shuffling as those not already on their feet rise obediently as Charles V, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, enters and takes his place in the center of the Council. Behind him is the Pope's personal representative and a following of Church officials, who have formed this investigating committee. Before the Council begins, I want you to meet someone here in the audience that is a personal friend of Dr. Luther's. Come over here sir, and tell the radio and TV audience your name.

MELANCTHON: I'm Philip Melancthon. I've known Dr. Luther for a number of years. You see, he and I are professors at Wittenberg University. I teach Greek and Hebrew, and Dr. Luther teaches Bible. We have become quite good friends through

our school association.

ANNOUNCER: Dr. Melancthon, could you tell us something of Dr. Luther's early life?

MELANTHON: I'll be glad to tell you what I know. Martin Luther is a native of Eisleben, Germany. He was born there in 1483. Coming from a poor home, he knew few of the better things in life—until one day his father began earning more money. Then Martin was sent to the University of Erfurt, one of the best schools in Europe. He studied the Bible and decided to become an Augustinian Monk. I first learned to know Luther when he began serving as a teacher and parish priest at Wittenberg. That was just after his ordination.

ANNOUNCER: Perhaps you also know what got him into all this trouble.

MELANTHON: Yes, I believe I do. After he came to Wittenberg, Luther changed. Many questions concerning the Bible bothered him. He was particularly aware of his lack of understanding because he was teaching the Word. He prayed and studied over the matter. One passage in Romans was unusually distressing to Luther, until one day he realized its meaning—"the just *shall* live by faith!" Believing this fact wholeheartedly, Luther began to preach and teach it. Naturally, his instructors did not agree with him. They held to the idea that so many masses must be repeated each day to assure one's salvation—indulgences should be bought for those in purgatory. But Luther stuck with his belief—and that began all the trouble.

ANNOUNCER: I understand that anyone who wants to argue a question with another person nails his written ideas on the door of the church. Since the church is the central building, everyone reads what is posted there. So Luther nails to the door of the Castle Church at Wittenberg his 95 *Theses* or statements that he wanted to debate. The date was October 31, 1517,—440 years ago today!

MELANTHON: Yes, one copy of his *Theses* was sent to the head of the Roman Church. A reply came back saying Luther was a "drunken German." But apparently Luther was not drunk. His writings were in such demand that several printers were kept busy filling the orders. A while later, Luther received a paper saying he would be ordered from the Church if he didn't stop preaching and writing his new idea. Luther burned the paper and ignored the threat. This act caused the trial we have today. The church sent him another letter saying he would have to appear before church officials at Worms, Germany, January 27, 1521.

ANNOUNCER: Thank you so much, Dr. Melancthon. You've helped us a great deal in understanding Dr. Martin Luther. We now have a better background for the proceedings at the trial. The room has become quiet. The defendant has been called to the center. He stands there, head erect—this 38 year old man—ready to face the Council. The questioning begins.

INQUISITOR: Are these your books?

LUTHER: Yes.

INQUISITOR: Did you write these things about the Roman Church?

LUTHER: Yes.

INQUISITOR: I ask you Martin Luther, will you not deny your books and the errors that are in them?

ANNOUNCER: (*breaks in*) Ladies and gentlemen Dr. Luther is standing there very calmly now. He has a great decision to make. If he does not take back what he has written and apologize, he will be accused of heresy and put to death. Just one short word will free this man. All he has to do is say "yes." Listen, he's beginning to speak!

LUTHER: (*Slowly, with dramatic emphasis*) My conscience is bound by the Word of God. I cannot, and I will not, take back anything I have said. I cannot go against what my conscience tells me is right. Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise! God help me!

ANNOUNCER: We have just witnessed one of the most important events in the history of the Church and world. I wonder what this will mean to people three to four hundred years from now? What is it going to mean in our time?

We're going to try to get impressions and ideas from those attending the trial. Here's a young gentleman over here.

ANNOUNCER: What do you think will happen to Dr. Luther?

YOUNG GENTLEMAN: Well, personally, I think they're going to burn him at the stake. This guy's crazy for saying he won't take back what he said about the Church. This is a serious offense. I think they ought to get rid of him. He'll just keep on stirring up trouble.

ANNOUNCER: And over here is a young lady. How do you think the Church will react to his decision?

YOUNG LADY: I think Luther is right. The Roman Church should take time to look back over what it teaches and maybe even revise it. Luther has done something that will change the world forever!

At this point the program continues with discussion in the audience. Here are some questions to get the ball rolling: What do you think happened to Luther after his trial? (Kidnapped by friends, taken to Wartburg Castle in Eisenach, worked on translations of the Bible, returned to Wittenberg in 1522.) Did Luther want to reform the Catholic Church or start a new Church? How has all this affected us today? Why did Luther's decision take real bravery? Are there places in the world today where Protestants are persecuted by the Roman Catholic Church?

ANNOUNCER: The words of Martin Luther, written in his 95 *Theses* and other works, and his famous words at the Diet of Worms, have made a difference for people of the modern world. What would you do if you were faced with the choice of holding true to the faith of your conscience and dying or giving up your faith in order to live? Could you say, "Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise!"?

TIMELY TEST ANSWERS

(Answers to the topic, "Are You a Bible Minute-Man?" on pages 8 and 9.)

1. Pharaoh's attempt to keep the Israelites enslaved which ended in crushing failure and calamity (Exodus, chapters 1 to 14); Haman's plot to hang Mordecai and massacre the Jews, resulting in his own death on the gallows (Esther, Chapters 3 to 7).
2. In Egypt when Joseph was the governor (Genesis 41:47-49, 53-57; 47:13-26).
3. Elisha, successor to Elijah (I Kings 19:19).
4. The wise men were led by a star from the East to the Christ child in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1-11).
5. Simon, the magician, was amazed by miracles Philip performed. He wanted this power of the Holy Spirit to use for his own prestige (Acts 8:9-24).
6. Peter (Acts 5:29).
7. Samson (Judges 15:3-5).
8. Gideon (Judges 8:22-23).
9. Jesus (Mark 3:25).
10. Daniel (Daniel 6:23).

Presentation Pointers

This is a rather lengthy topic. The leader will have to make diligent preparation if the point of the program is to be fully achieved. The topic can be divided at the sub-titles and given to different persons to read and discuss.

Since this is the final program of the missions series, possibly a summation of the four topics can be compiled and presented by a leaguer or the advisor. Discussion on the theme as a whole—or on the need for and qualities of missionaries—may prove interesting. The advisor or parish worker could be instrumental in keeping the talks alive.

LLA literature on missions, if not already on hand, should be ordered from 1228 Spruce St., Philadelphia 7, Pa. ("Church in a Chicken Coop," "Books and Blossoms," and "Eyes of Fear"). Fliers from Lutheran World Action would be beneficial during one particular part of the topic; they would also serve as visual aids. LWA material may be ordered from National Lutheran Council, 50 Madison Ave., New York.

At another part of the program, a globe can be used effectively to create the feeling of both a large and a small world. References to Bible passages are made frequently during the topic. Perhaps one leaguer could be responsible for finding and reading them at the appointed times.

As a call to worship, the great commission, Matthew 28:16-20, would be appropriate. For scripture, either Romans 10:8-17 (stressing the need for missionaries) or Romans 1:14-17 (proof that Paul is a missionary) could be used. Three hymns that are suitable are 270, 274, and 278 (all in the *CYH*). The missions prayer (No. 71) on page 376 of *CYH* may also be used.

fourth and final topic
in a series
on missions

We Must Run

St. Paul insisted that there are only two times when Christians should witness to men concerning their faith in Jesus—"in season" and "out of season"—when it is convenient and when it is not convenient.

The world mission to which Christ calls us is urgent, in some measure because of this present worldwide confusion and distress, but to a much larger part because of the nature of the Gospel itself.

Terrific Rate of Speed

A jet pilot tells me that he was high over Nebraska just as people were going to church and he was back at his base in Ohio having dinner with his family at noon. Planes and guided rockets have exceeded the speed of sound so often that our newspapers no longer trouble to report the fact. This is the world in which we live. Yet, there are some people—within our churches, too—who are as provincial in their ideas and actions as though they lived in an era in which it takes two months to cross the Atlantic. They are tragically out of date—a menace just as an ox-cart would be on a Long Island expressway.

Unless your heart and mind are 25,000 miles in circumference, they are too small.

There is at least some justification for the "lag" we see so frequently: things are moving at a terrific rate of speed! The invention of the wheel is generally considered to have been the first step toward civilization. Yet, in Africa, the first wheels some people ever saw were on the landing gears of airplanes! Recently a woman, newly arrived in a town of New Guinea, startled reporters by her excitement at seeing a train, the first of her experience. When she was asked how she had gotten there from her isolated home village, she replied matter-of-factly, "I flew in an airplane."

Little wonder that Prime Minister Nehru of India should describe his ancient land, so newly arrived at independence, in the words, "Time has passed by and we have not kept pace with it. And so we have suddenly arrived at a stage where we have to run—walking is not enough—and in running we stumble and fall and we try to get up again." Many in the Christian Church are stumbling, too. That may be embarrassing or even painful, but what really matters is that we know that in such a world as this we *must* run.

Total Mobilization

In its early centuries Christianity faced—and conquered—such powerful rivals as the mystery cults of Mythras, Osiris, and Cybele. Today it must face the challenge of such confident rival faiths as a rejuvenated Islam, bent upon raising the crescent banner over all Africa; a Hinduism that shares in the heady wine of India's new power; and a Buddhism that has regained the missionary zeal of its early youth. Even more powerful are the "this-worldly" religions of Marxist Communism and of Western materialism.

Not in centuries has our faith been subjected to such a test. Whether the Church will again triumph over its worldly rivals depends, under God, upon our energetic participation in its world mission.

Christians should be under no illusions. This is no day for wishful dreaming, for "business as usual." This is war, a war that calls for total mobilization of all our resources.

From the viewpoint of our religion, much of the world is a huge vacuum. Something must fill it; something *will* fill it. Either we who believe in Jesus Christ will insert Him into this "God-shaped space" that is in man, or others will stuff in their false gods and terrible ideologies. And the decision is being made now.

If you have ever heard the plaintive, yet joyful music of the Finnish folk melody, you will never forget the words,

*Lost in the night doth the heathen yet languish,
Longing for morning the darkness to vanquish,
Plaintively heaving a sigh full of anguish,
Oh! Christ is coming soon.*

*Sorrowing brother in darkness yet dwelling,
Dawned has the day of a radiance excelling,
Death's dreaded darkness forever dispelling,
Lo, Christ is coming soon.*

*Light o'er the land of the heathen is beaming,
Rivers of life through its deserts are streaming,
Millions yet sigh for the Savior redeeming,
He is coming soon.*

*Must he be vainly awaiting the morrow?
Shall we, no light and no comfort him borrow?
Giving no heed to his burden of sorrow:
Oh, will not day come soon?*

Missions Opinion

"What do you think about missions?" is only a modern form of a much older question, "What do you think of the Christ?" (Matthew 22:42). If He is all that the New Testament asserts and the century-long witness of the Church proclaims, then missions is both an inevitable and urgent fact.

Apart from Him there is only darkness and emptiness, whether men live in "Gold Coast" apartments along Lake Michigan or sleep on the stones of Calcuttas streets. This terrible judgment on all men whatever their culture, education, wealth, or nation, is an inseparable part of the Biblical message. Look at its most glorious single verse that tells of the measureless greatness of God's love and His yearning for man's salvation, and you find the somber word "perish" (John 3:16).

What do *you* think of Christ and of man's need for Him? The only believable answer is the one given by your life and obedience.

The Whole Man

When Marlen E. Pew, then the editor of "Editor and Publisher," toured the streets of an Asian city, he wrote,

*Tonight a sight has seared my eyes,
On Bombay's reeking pavement stones
Sheeted bundles of skin and bones,
Ten thousand ghostly humans lie . . ."*

For years the story of sights like that were used to pull money from the reluctant pockets of churchmen. They were true. Today, they could be duplicated from many areas of the globe. Such an appeal had a very real justification. We who know that God created and loves man—all men—and who intends the whole of every man for eternal fellowship with Himself, would not dare pass any human tragedy unconcernedly.

Even, if, for a moment, the vision of that love should be dimmed by our selfishness, we would be forced to stop by the recollection of our Lord's condemnation of the "religious" men who "passed by on the other side" when there

was a needy traveller by the roadside (Luke 10: 29-37).

Christian missions would not be Christian if they did not include hospitals, schools for the blind, orphanages, etc. So, in our present world, Lutheran World Action is a vital part of our total missionary response.

Yet, insisting on this as we must, it is still true that this often-used appeal is only partially adequate. It suggests that our Christian concern is primarily with the bodies of men. This would imply, in turn, that we need not feel concern for the welfare of men who are well-fed, well-clothed, and well-housed. Both of these implications must be vigorously rejected.

God—and therefore His children—is concerned about the whole man, and not merely about the soul-part or the body-part of him. To ignore either portion of man's nature is to separate what God has joined eternally together. It is not true that man's needs are solely external.

Do you recall the inspired injection of the Salvation Army member when a Red speaker in Hyde Park claimed, "Socialism will put a new coat on every man." The Christian said quickly, "Christ will do better than that; He will put a new man in every coat." Exactly! The prosperous American and the well-bred Briton need that miracle as much as the most ignorant coolie or a naked pigmy. This Gospel is for all men.

Surely our Lord would say, "These you ought to have done without neglecting the others" (Luke 11:42), and "What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can man give in return for his life?" (Mark 8: 36-37).

Continuing Evangelism

It should never be forgotten that the Christian religion is wholly dependent upon a continuing program of evangelism. If it were to cease telling men the glorious Good News, our religion would vanish. The Christian religion roots in the revelation that God of His own nature and will, gave through patriarchs,

law-givers, prophets, poets, kings, and finally and supremely, in His Son (Cp. Hebrews 1:1-2).

It depends, therefore, upon the willingness and ability of one generation to transmit this Word of revelation to another—of those who have heard to speak to those who sit in darkness. It is a sobering fact to realize that, humanly speaking, Christianity lives but a single generation at a time. That is why we are compelled, by the very nature of the Gospel, to take this missionary assignment with full seriousness.

The Church loses her own life when it retreats into a catacomb. Its task is not to preserve as best it can some remnant of its being, but to be the yeast in human society. Yeast, of course, can function only when it is implanted in flour. Separated, both yeast and flour are useless. Christians are not called to a selfish struggle for existence, but to a selfless struggle to share. They are seed, planted in the earth by the Master. The seeds either bud or rot.

Walter R. Bowie has called attention to a once-great-city whose ruins have recently been uncovered in North Africa. It was Leptis Magna, the birthplace of one of the Roman emperors and once a major port from which the ships of war and commerce sailed. One day the city vanished. The cause was undramatic. No foreign army levelled its walls, nor were they broken down by earthquake. The city's disaster came from the fact that its fine harbor was permitted to be blocked by silt. Thus its commerce with the outer world was destroyed. Gradually its citizens abandoned it and the desert sands gained the upper hand.

That tragedy has been repeated in human lives, and in the lives of churches. If the harbors of our sympathy and helpfulness are choked shut by the silt of indifference, we soon die and the desert sands cover us. We are safe ourselves, only so long as our harbors are open to the traffic of the world. A Church without a vital awareness of its world mission is, or soon will be, a dead Church. The fate of Christendom in the once-

Christian areas of the Near East and North Africa should serve as a warning to us.

Go Therefore . . .

Christian compulsion is something other than a fear of evil consequences. It is rather the compulsion that Kagawa tells of. He was a young man, not yet a Christian, and determined to taste all the pleasures of life to the full. Then he was taken seriously ill and lay alone in his room, forsaken by all his fair-weather friends. One day, there came a knock at his door and a voice asked permission to enter. But Kagawa warned, "Don't come in; my disease is contagious." The door opened and a stranger said gently, "My religion is contagious, too, so let me help." *Such a life-giving contagion is the hope of the world.*

One of the memorable and tragic words of World War II is, "Too little and too late." Will that be the epitaph history must write over the ruins of Western Christianity? Or will we—at long, long last—set ourselves to adequate obedience to our Lord's mission?

It may be costly, for the pathway of the Church's triumph is studded with the graces of martyrs. After all, it began at a Cross. But that fact has not frightened away those who know Him Who conquered the grave.

Like the young missionary on a tramp steamer going along the steamy African coast to his field of service. The captain found him attractive and sought to warn him. "Don't you know," he said, "that this coast is the burial ground for white men? You'll not be here two years before you'll sicken and die." But the calm and confident answer came, "I'm not afraid; you see, I died before I left London."

"He that loseth his life for my sake, the same shall find it" (Matthew 10:39). "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations . . . and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20).

"And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God." (Luke 17:15, KJV)

O
N
E

I
N

T
E
N

Topic for Thanksgiving

Presentation Pointers

Have someone read Luke 17:11-19. Then tell the story of the lepers, using the material given here. When you have established your background, lead into the application of the "one in ten" ratio in everyday life. Ask leaguers to list their blessings (individually with paper and pencils or as a group on the blackboard). Have them check those blessings for which they gave thanks during the day.

Various leaguers may tell the four stories. Or these sections may be used as sources for skits; very few props are needed and dialogue can be developed easily. Questions following the sections may be asked after each presentation or as general discussion after the four skits have been presented.

All thoughts should be drawn together in a conclusion by the leader.

Have several displays illustrating gifts that surround us. For example: a table of food; a cross and Bible; model of a village; pictures of a family; pets; a newspaper and magazines; and toy cars, airplanes, and trains. Use one of these displays as a worship center.

Encourage personal application with projects: (1) make personal prayer calendars; (2) make altar cloths and crosses for family worship; (3) organize a clothing drive; (4) plan to attend Thanksgiving services in a body; (5) write and mimeograph several graces; (6) divide into smaller groups and have prayer circles; and (7) plan a series of Thank-u-grams for parents. (A story of Thank-u-grams may be found in *The Lutheran*, June 2, 1957.)

THE sun shone brightly as Jesus and His disciples walked along the road to Jerusalem. They were passing through the lands of Samaria and Galilee on their way to the holy city. In one of these countries they entered a small village.

The village was like any other village. As usual, when Jesus and His followers entered, they were surrounded by a crowd of men, women, and children who looked to the man from Nazareth to heal their bodies and give food to their souls.



only one
in ten
returns thanks

by
Elizabeth
J.
Miller

Among this throng that pressed about Him—yet apart from all the others—Jesus may have noticed a group of men—ten in number—who were set apart from their fellow villagers by the marks of a dreaded disease.

These men were lepers. They were stricken by a disease so feared that those who contracted it were forbidden to live with their families and friends. They were forced to spend their lives as outcasts. Such was the condition of these men who cried to Jesus for mercy and healing.

When Jesus saw them, He was moved with compassion for their wretched state. And so He said to them, "Go show yourselves to the priests." (It was the custom for a leper to appear before the authorities to prove his cure before returning to his family.)

As the men walked away they discovered that they were healed. The marks of leprosy had disappeared.

Their bodies were free from disease. One of the men—and only one—was so grateful for the return of his health that he turned back and ran to give thanks to Jesus for this blessing.

Jesus noticed that among the ten that He had healed, only this one—a Samaritan and a stranger—returned to give thanks. What sorrow must have been in His heart for the other nine who could not be bothered to thank the One who had given them help.

A Modern Ratio

Which of the ten are we? Are we like the one man who remembered to give thanks for his blessing? Or do we, like the other nine, become so occupied

PURPOSE OF THE TOPIC:

1. To consider the story of the ten lepers who were healed by Jesus as a lesson in life for all.
2. To urge a daily Thanksgiving for blessings.

with ourselves that we forget from whom these gifts have come? Is this "one in ten" the ratio that exists in our modern world?

It has been said that we never appreciate anything until it is gone and we have it no longer. This may be our problem in regards to God's blessings. We are surrounded by the good and great gifts that the Father sends us and we take them so much for granted that few of us take time to say "thank you."

A popular song a few years ago was titled "Count Your Blessings." It would be a good guide for many of us. All that is necessary for such a count is a sheet of paper, a sharp pencil, a keen eye, and a thankful heart. Wherever we look we find evidence of many blessings. The telephone that enables us to call a friend for a coke date or talk over tomorrow's algebra problems . . . the cookie jar on the kitchen table that provides food to satisfy our hunger and symbolizes the love of mother who baked the cookies . . . the picture from summer camp . . . the open Bible on the bookcase . . . the roller skates in the corner . . . the candles on the family altar . . . the list goes on and on.

If we can forget so easily the small blessings that surround us, how long shall we remember the Source from which all things, large and small, come to us? Here are some everyday happenings. How would we react in these situations?

I

Pat Boone sings his latest disc from the juke box at the far end of the malt shop. In the corner sit a group of students from John Hancock High, enjoying a milkshake or a coke after a rugged school day. The chatter is about school affairs—the coming junior high dance, the Friday night football game.

"Hi, kids! How did you make out in the Latin test, Don?" Jack Winds, freshman class president, joins the group. "Do you think we can beat Ben Franklin on Friday?" Jack calls across the table to several of the football players. In a lower voice to the girl at his side he asks, "Have

a date for the dance yet, Peggy?"

At this point the cheeseburgers and shakes arrive. In the midst of the chatter Jack bows his head and gives thanks for the food.

1. Would you have done as Jack did in this situation?

2. Has this ever happened among you and your friends?

3. What were the reactions of those at the table with Jack?

4. Why are most of us reluctant to ask a blessing in public?

II

"I can't think of the answer! I just can't remember that date! I studied it last night and I have to know it. Three more minutes and he will collect our test papers. I can't think of the answers! This question can mean a passing grade. I can't—I got it! I got it!"

"Was that ever luck!" sighed Nancy as she turns in her history test paper.

In another corner of the same classroom another history student is having problems too. Her brow is drawn in concentration. "Who was Pennsylvania's only gift to the presidency?" She thinks of possibilities. "Thomas Jefferson? No. Abe Lincoln? No. James Buchanan? That's it! That's it! Oh, thank you, dear God, for helping me to think of the answer," breathes Ann.

1. Was it "luck" that Nancy thought of the answer?

2. Do you ever take time out during a school day to give thanks for the mind that God has given you?

3. What's the difference between asking God for the right answer in a test and asking him for the power to think clearly?

4. Must one be in a certain position or place for prayer?

III

Shouts of "Ten off your score!" "Don't knock mine off number seven!" fill the recreation room of St. Paul's as a group of leaguers pour their energy into a game of shuffleboard following the Sunday evening meeting. Several girls are gathered about the piano harmonizing on a favorite tune. A ping pong ball bounces

on a ping pong table in the corner.

Wayne and Beth are upstairs putting away songbooks and straightening chairs. "Did you ever stop to think, Beth, how really lucky we are? How many kids have the use of a recreation room like ours, or even the place for worship that we have?"

"Yes, and remember the trip we took to the campus of Lutheran College and all the fun we had! We couldn't have done that without our advisors' support," chimes in Beth.

"Or," adds Wayne thoughtfully, "sent a delegate to the national convention if the council hadn't been so interested—and how often do we say thanks to them or for them?"

"Let's have a real Thanksgiving meeting," cries Beth, "to show our appreciation!"

1. Do you take your church facilities for granted?
2. How often have you said "thank you" to your advisors?
3. Would the adults of your church appreciate a show of your thankfulness for what they have done?
4. Do you ever thank God for your Luther League?

IV

Ray dashes up the stairs two at a time and into his room to change clothes for football practice. On the bed is a pile of newly ironed white shirts. He touches the top one and explodes into a torrent of words. "She did it again! I've told her and told her not to put so much starch in these shirts! What does a guy have to do around here to get his mother to do things right—"

Suddenly he stops, remembering a conversation in the hall at school today. Some of the guys had been talking about their family's plans for Thanksgiving. Gerry, a new boy at school, had been silent. In answer to their questions he had replied, "My mother and father are both dead."

Ray, standing among the familiar sights in his room tries to imagine of what it would be like without his mother and dad. Where would he live? Who

would make his meals? Who could he turn to to share problems and achievements? Yes, and who would iron his white shirts? How long had it been since he had thanked his mother or father for doing any of these things. With this thought Ray utters a prayer of thanks.

Dashing through the kitchen on the way to practice, he calls, "Thanks for ironing my shirts, and-uh-gee-thanks for being such a swell mother!"

1. What do your parents do for you that should make you thankful?
2. How often do you say thank you to mother or dad?
3. How often do you say thanks for them to God?
4. Can you think of ways you could show your appreciation to your parents?

Continuous Thanksgiving Day

A little child often is reminded by his parents, "Don't forget to say thank-you." So, too, do we need reminders to turn back and glorify God.

There are many ways that we who bear the name of Christian can say "thank you"—by asking a blessing at meal time, by praising God daily through Bible reading and prayer in our personal devotions and as a family, by regular attendance at church and Sunday school, by taking an active part in Luther League, by helping others who are less fortunate, by giving of time, talents, and lives to the work of Christ. This list, like that of our blessings, goes on and on.

Statistics are quoted every day in magazines, newspapers, and by TV newscasters. Few are as important to our ears as the cry that one in ten returns thanks for blessings. Is this a true criticism of our day? If it is, we must do our best to change the ratio so that we are not counted among those about whom the Saviour asked his sorrowful question, "Were there not ten healed? But where are the nine?"

At this Thanksgiving season may it be our resolve to keep gratitude glowing in our hearts, making all of life a continuous Thanksgiving Day.

"This Is Your Life"

RUTH

Presentation Pointers

This radio show is simple to present, yet creates an inspirational atmosphere. Only prop needed is an imitation mike. Dress the Bible characters in modern clothes.

The MC's last two speeches, the reference given by the Voice, and the leader's remarks at the end of the program should be spoken slowly with much feeling. The success of the topic rests largely on these lines.

You may plan to have a short retreat in connection with this topic. Rather than using the discussion at the end, let the young people go by themselves to read the Book of Ruth and have private meditation.

by Mrs. George Nesbitt



Hymn: "O Come, O Come, Immanuel" (4 CYH)

Leader: When God wants an important thing done in this world he goes about it in a very singular way. He does not release his thunderbolts or stir up earthquakes. He simply has a tiny baby born, perhaps in a humble home, of a humble mother. But he puts the idea or purpose into the mother's heart. And she puts it into the baby's mind; and then . . . God waits! The great events of the world are not battles and elections and earthquakes and thunderbolts. The great events are babies . . .

(Edward-McDonald)

First Scripture: Luke 2:1-7

Second Scripture: Matthew 1:1-6

A Christmas Topic Bible Study-Ruth



MASTER OF CEREMONIES: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. We are happy once again to bring you the nation's most talked about program, "This Is Your Life." Our guest for the evening is a famous one. She is one of the most beloved characters of the Bible. Her kindness and devotion to others will long be remembered. But do you know what breathtaking event has acclaimed her before millions? Her important role in the destiny of mankind will be told to you tonight, for this is your life, Ruth! (*Ruth comes on stage.*) We are indeed happy to travel back through the pages of the Bible to relive your life, Ruth. Tell us of the conditions of the world when you were a girl.

RUTH: I lived during the time of the Judges. Times were hard, especially in Judah, across the Dead Sea. The people suffered frequent famines. My country, however, had plenty of food and people from Judah often came to our country to live.

MC: Tell us a little about your country, Ruth.

RUTH: My homeland is Moab. Moab was a land of idol worship—our god was Chemosh. People who came from Judah felt very far from their god in a land like ours. They worshipped the god Jehovah. I met my first husband in Moab. He had come to my country from a little town called Bethlehem of Judah with his parents and a brother. My husband and I had ten wonderful and happy years together. But he became ill and died.

MC: Yes, Ruth, your marriage was shortened by your husband's tragic death. But still you were happy. Who was it that made your life so pleasant for you?

RUTH: It was my mother-in-law, Naomi. She was so wonderful to me—just like my own mother.

MC: Yes, it was Naomi who brought you happiness, and here she comes across our stage now. (*Naomi enters; women embrace.*) I can readily see how much you have meant to each other. Tell me, Naomi, what happened to Ruth after her husband died?

NAOMI: My husband died also. I was filled with grief and decided to return to Judah. Ruth and my other daughter-in-law, Orpah, wanted to come with me on the journey. But I knew both girls were young and should marry again. And so I told the girls to return to their homes, to their own people.

MC: And did they?

NAOMI: Orpah did for she was homesick for her people. But Ruth was not so easily persuaded. She said she wanted to remain with me.

MC: Why did you desire to stay with your mother-in-law, Ruth?

RUTH: I had lived with Naomi and her family for many years. They were people of God. In my country I had been taught to bow down before the idol Chemosh. I feared him and even made sacrifices to him. But the God of Naomi seemed to be different . . . and he made Naomi such a wonderful person. I wanted to be with her.

NAOMI: I knew Ruth's mind could not be changed for she said, "Entreat me not to leave you or to return from following you; for where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God; where you die I will die, and there will I be buried." With such dedication, what could I say?

MC: This was a momentous decision for a young woman to make. It required courage and sacrifice to give up your home and relatives to accompany a poverty stricken mother-in-law into a strange land. But this decision of yours, Ruth, was to be the turning point of your life! (*A soloist sings "O Love that Wilt Not Let Me Go"—202 CYH.*) Now let's continue the story of your life and see what happened to you as a result of your choice. As you and Naomi started on your journey to Bethlehem, what was it that worried you, Ruth?

RUTH: I wondered how I would be treated when we arrived in Bethlehem. I was a foreigner, you know, and didn't expect to be treated with much kindness by the Jews.

MC: And what happened when you and Naomi arrived in Bethlehem?

RUTH: The town was curious to see who Naomi had brought back with her. Naomi's friends were glad to see her and I was kindly received by them. We arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest. I knew I would have to find some way to earn a living because Naomi and I had no money. Fortunately, the Jewish law made provision for the poor by allowing them to glean, which is gathering what is left in the fields after the reapers. I asked Naomi to let me earn our living in this way.

MC: And to the fields you went, Ruth, to earn a living for Naomi and yourself. Here in the fields you were to meet another person who was to play an important part in your life . . . a person you were to meet as a result of your decision to remain with Naomi . . . and who was that?

RUTH: That was Boaz who became my husband.

MC: Won't you tell us how you met your second husband.

RUTH: I remember it was a very warm, sunny afternoon. I was gleaning in fields which belonged to a man named Boaz. As I worked I saw a tanned, dark-eyed man walking through the fields. He stopped a few yards away to talk to the servant in charge of the reapers. I heard the man ask who I was.

MC: And then it was that you and Boaz met.

RUTH: He told me not to glean in any other fields than his. I was to keep close to his maidens and the young men were charged not to bother me. I felt so safe. He was greatly respected by his servants; they had told me often of his kind treatment of them. But I could not understand why he should treat me, a foreigner, with such courtesy.

MC: Well, let's hear in his own words why he did. Boaz, will you come out on the stage, please. (*Boaz enters.*) Ruth has been telling us of your assurance that she would be protected while working in your fields. Will you tell us why you were so kind to this foreigner?

BOAZ: I had heard of Ruth's love and devotion for Naomi . . . how loyal and faithful she had been in providing for her needs. I admired Ruth's willingness to leave her family and country and come to a strange land and strange people. To me, Ruth was a woman to be greatly respected.

MC: She certainly is! Naomi, what was your reaction when Ruth returned from the fields after meeting Boaz?

NAOMI: I asked where she had worked that day and if anyone had seen her. She told me how kindly Boaz had treated her.

☆*Your people shall be my people, and your God my God . . .*

RUTH: Naomi was thankful we were so fortunate to find someone like Boaz. She said, "Blessed be he by the Lord whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead." Naomi's God had given us so much to be thankful for . . . but he was no longer only Naomi's God . . . he was my God, too.

MC: Can you tell us further of her reaction?

RUTH: Naomi wanted me to marry—to know the joy and happiness of a home and family of my own. According to the laws of Naomi's people, the nearest of kin was to marry the widow.

MC: Boaz was your relative and he wanted to be your husband.

RUTH: Yes, but he remained true to the Jewish law; I had a closer relative than Boaz. However, the other relative gave up his claim to me and I became Boaz's wife.

MC: You and Boaz were to know even greater joy.

RUTH: Yes, for a son was born to us.

BOAZ: Naomi was so proud and happy you'd have thought it was her own baby boy. The women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the Lord who has not left you this day without next of kin." The women felt that Ruth meant more to Naomi than many sons.

RUTH: The neighbors named the baby for us. They called him Obed which means servant, for they wanted him to serve the Lord.

BOAZ: Our son, Obed, is grandfather of the great King David. Ruth and I are David's great-grandparents.

MC: It seems to me, Ruth, that your decision to remain with Naomi was a choice you have never had cause to regret. Your happiness in your home life with Naomi and Boaz was a result of your decision. Your coming to accept and believe in the one true God was a result that had even more meaning in your life. Your decision allowed God to work His Divine plan through you. Bethlehem . . . where you and Naomi made your home . . . it was here that the Saviour was born. But even more thrilling than the fact that you should live in the town of the birthplace of the Saviour, is the fact that you, Ruth, became the great-grandmother of David the King, of whose line the Christ Child was born. You had a share in the coming of the Son of God—the destiny of mankind. This above all, Ruth, was the most wonderful result of your wise decision.

VOICE: (*as characters slowly leave stage.*) "Entreat me not to leave you or to return from following you; for where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God . . ."

MC: This is your life, Ruth, ancestor of Jesus Christ.

Leader: God rewarded Ruth's loyalty, her decisiveness, and her patient endurance. Ruth placed her life in the hands of God, accepted His will, and received much happiness. As the Christ Child's birth is celebrated once again, let us resolve like Ruth, to place our lives in the hands of God. Christmas and Ruth—did you ever associate the two before? What marvelous things are possible for those who put their lives in the hands of God.

Hymn: "O Little Town of Bethlehem" (14 CYH)

Discussion: Why is the Book of Ruth important? What made Ruth a good ancestor of our Lord? What picture do we get of God in the story of Ruth? What lessons can we learn from Ruth's life? What principles governed Ruth's choice? What are some important decisions young people have to make today? In making decisions, does it make any difference whether or not they are made in line with Christian principles? Would you like to share with the group any experience you have had in which you have felt God working His will in your life?

Benediction





christmas topic
by dave ullery

Purpose of the Topic

This topic is designed to acquaint the reader with some of the major features in the life of St. Francis of Assisi. The basis of his Christian motivation is the tremendous force that God exerted upon him. This force is being exerted today. It should become clear that this is the kind of life that is worthwhile—it leads to true happiness.

Although it is not our purpose to lead youth into the way of the mystic or ascetic, it *is* our purpose to point out the basis for our Christian love and service. *He* served God. So must all of us. We are no different in this respect from the Saint.

HE SERVED GOD

(St. Francis of Assisi)

a man who liked simplicity
made the first manger scene

Presentation Pointers

This topic was written so it could be read easily by all members of your intermediate league. If they have not read the topic before the meeting, the leader should, in his own words, tell the story of St. Francis. He may want to use supplementary helps from encyclopedias, biographies of Francis, or history books he may find in his pastor's library.

After the story has been told, allow time for questions. The good leader will be careful to make statements during his presentation that will lead to questions.

Have some of the other members of the group prepared to give an account of the historical situation of St. Francis' time, or to give accounts of what has happened to the Franciscans since their founder's death. This would bring more of the group into the actual presentation.

Discussion questions should definitely be used in a topic of this kind. What is the value of a study of such a man? Could anyone make the same kind of impression in the world of today? Was Francis just a fanatic, or did he really experience the love of God in the way that he said he did? Do you think that Francis put too much emphasis upon service, and not enough upon improving himself, so that his service might become more intelligent?

THERE are many beautiful customs that we observe each year at Christmas time. One of the most appreciated and popular is the erection of manger-scenes. These are adorned with simple things—worshipping shepherds, a small baby, a glowing star, and quiet animals. And in their simplicity they reflect the spirit of the man who first made a manger scene.

Many years ago, a ragged man and his companion were walking across the hills of Italy. They had been traveling for some time; they were tired. But, as they approached a small town that was a favorite of one of the men, they wondered what they might do to surprise the inhabitants of the sleeping town. And as they planned, the thought of rest was completely lost.

It was nearly Christmas time. This gave them an idea. They rounded up

some animals, took parts of a manger stall from the stable of a friend, and located a doll and some willing helpers. And, when the town awakened, a small cave nearby had been turned into the first Christmas creche! So the legend goes . . .

Such an act as this could only be the expression of love—love for God and for all men. And this was the kind of love that possessed St. Francis of Assisi who has enriched the world with his simple remembrance of the birth of our Lord. This was a love that was to carry him to the highest peaks of human recognition—a love that even today causes us to turn to him to find its source and secret.

His Life

The name Francis is a nickname given to the lad who was born Giovanni Bernardone in the year 1181 A.D. This was in a period of history that saw the rise from the Dark Ages—a time when art, literature, and religion were being talked about by almost everyone who had any education. Francis was a happy youth. His father was a well-to-do cloth merchant, and he was able to get some of the basic education that would prepare him to take over the business. But even from his birth, there were those men who thought that God had singled him out for a special task—that someday he must answer the call of God with his life.

But Francis gave no hint that he would be a servant of God. His early years were spent with other young boys who had little to do, and they were not above playing practical jokes on their friends and neighbors. Francis soon became a leader of the gang of boys. Did this fill his longing for fame and recognition? No! His heart was empty. He longed for something more.

He thought he had found what he was looking for when his little town of Assisi went to war. He was thrilled indeed, for his father was prosperous enough to outfit him in the finest fighting armor! So off he went—only to find disappointment. Francis was captured, and his

dreams of earthly glory soon faded. He did get another chance to fight after he was released, but this time he became ill and was forced to turn his saddened face homeward.

Now the call of God grew stronger upon the soul of Francis. Prayer and deep meditation brought new thoughts to him. He began to minister to the needs of the poor and the sick. Once, as he was riding down a lonely road, he saw a leper. In spite of the horrible appearance of the man, Francis leaped from his horse and embraced the poor wretch, and gave him his own fine clothes. In an old, deserted chapel, Francis would spend long hours in prayer before the cross. It became a favorite spot for him.

His wealthy father began to think that his son had gone crazy. He was enraged when he discovered that his son was associating with common peasants and the sick. He forbade Francis to go out, but his mother, who had always hoped and prayed that her son would become a man of God, released him, and Francis continued to minister to people's needs.

Finally, his father took him before the bishop so that he might disinherit him publicly. But Francis, unafraid, gave his life to Christ's Kingdom. He stripped off the clothes which his father had given to him and stood before the bishop clothed only in a haircloth. Then he declared for all to hear that from that time on he desired to live only for Christ and "Our Father which art in heaven."

He kept his word. Never again did he desire to own any of the fine things to which he had been accustomed. His only thought was to live as Christ had lived. He did nothing but sing praises to God, wandering about the countryside, singing, and telling all—even birds, animals, and flowers—of the depths of the love of God. At first people thought he was crazy, but soon they could tell that this man had been chosen by God for a special task.

He was a tireless worker. Many were the chapels that he helped to rebuild with his own hands. He begged for all the food he ate—asking to be given only

crumbs at that. Everywhere he went he called men to repentance, radiating the love of Jesus. Shortly, some of those from Assisi wanted to join with Francis, so he told them to sell all that they had, give to the poor, and travel about, claiming nothing for their own but the love of God.

It was not easy. There still were those who thought that these men were mad and should be kept away from towns and churches. They pelted these simple men with mud and stones, tore the clothes from their backs, and insulted them. But they were not to be daunted. Soon they had organized into an order known as "The Little Brothers."

These brothers did more than preach. They *sang* the good news of Jesus wherever they went. Francis wrote some of the hymns of praise that they sang, but most of them were composed as they traveled through the countryside. They felt honored to be known as "Troubadours of God."

Most of us, even today, think of a great love of nature when we think of St. Francis. For this great man, even though he became a leader of many men, could never thank his God enough for the beauty that He had created. Francis called everything by name, such as Brother Fire and Sister Water, and even preached sermons to the birds of the air, asking them to sing praise to God. We would think such a man crazy today, unless, of course, we knew that these things were done because God was touching his heart.

Francis could never rest. He soon got the idea that he should travel to the far ends of the earth, converting those who believed in other gods. He set out for the Holy Land to convert the Mohammedans, but a shipwreck held him back. On his way to Spain, he became ill, and had to turn back once more. But he sent his brothers in his place, so that the joy that he had found in the simple life of doing God's will might be known to more and more men.

Such a hard life was too much for even a spirit like this. While in his mid-for-

ties, he died in the same Church where he had first heard the call of God only seventeen years before. True to his way of life, he died lying on the bare ground, clothed only in his haircloth.

"Who Cares?"

By the standards of our present world, we would think that Francis was one of the most miserable men who ever lived. Think of it! Here was a young person who had all the advantages that he could want. He was in a much better situation than most of the young men of his day. And he knew it, too. He thought that he would be able to find happiness by doing what he wanted, but found that he was dead wrong. God had reached out for him, as He does to each of us today, and Francis knew that he must answer.

God told him that he must be the one who would show the world that they were placing too much attention on themselves and not upon that which God wanted for them. Such a task set before a young man would be staggering indeed! How could anyone prove to men who thought their lives complete, the idea that they were missing so much? How could anyone convince such sinful men that it is only God who gives true happiness?

Francis showed men the truth. He shined forth brilliantly like a candle. And just as a candle does when it burns, Francis gave himself for those he served. He did not know what it was to feel unkindly towards anyone. He did not know what it was to complain about little things that go wrong. Nor did he know what it was to seek things for himself. He knew only that he must serve God, and that this meant that He follow Christ and His teachings all the way.

As he grew in this feeling of commitment, a strange transformation came over this young man who had once lived only for the fun and companionship of rowdy friends. Now a new friendship was taking their place! A new kind of joy came over him. It seemed as though something had been removed from his eyes—he

was seeing for the first time. The beauty of God's creation became meaningful for him, and his heart burst with the glory and majesty of the God who loved *him!* No longer could he hold back anything from such love. He had to give, and he did so in the only way that he knew how. What he did, although it seems rather odd to us now, was the only way that Francis had to make his feelings known to men.

Such sincerity and love for his fellows naturally pulled on the hearts of others. Love attracts—it does not repel. It also seeks for the happiness of its object. In the case of Francis, this object was the entire world. Today, all the world has heard the name of Francis, and his love is one of the brightest chapters in Christian history.

It's quite a story, isn't it? How one man, in the face of challenges that seem impossible to overcome, took nothing but God's love, and become a Goliath-slaying David. He made all the world take note because he had allowed God to use him to serve men. He had come a long way from a fellow with a "Who cares?" attitude. Now he knew the answer: *God* cares. And because God cares, *I* must care also.

"Things to Do"

A topic is never complete until something is done about it. With the study of St. Francis, there are many things that can be done to carry through the topic.

How about trying some *Labors of Love* projects? Since Francis was so concerned about the sick and poor, now is the time for your league to visit the shut-ins in your congregation, or those in the hospitals. If it's not convenient to visit a hospital, make friendship cards, including small gifts, and see that the sick receive them. Check with your pastor, for there might be some things that you can do to help around the church. You might even become *Troubadours of God*. How about that youth choir that you have thought about? And don't forget Francis' love of nature—why not take a *St. Francis hike* sometime soon, with special emphasis upon seeing the beauty of God's creation? These are just a few! But be sure that anything you do springs from the love that God has placed in your hearts.

CHRISTMAS

LIGHTS

PURPOSE OF THIS TOPIC:

1. Help leaguers desire to put first things first in their Christmas preparation.
2. Make some visible reminder of this aim to use in the home or to share with others.
3. Accomplish the above by thinking about and discussing what Christmas is and what it should be.

by Mrs. William Martin



*plan this topic
for early
December*

Lights for the Leader

Always pray for inspiration and guidance before you attempt to lead others.

This topic isn't the kind you get up and read. It's a topic that keeps everyone busy from the time the door first opens until the door is locked after the meeting.

The topic is divided conveniently into sections. If you do not have enough time for the topic as it is planned, a section or two can be dropped.

Begin the Early Activities as soon as the first leaguer arrives. You will need pencils and paper and carol books. Follow this by your worship or group discussion. A blackboard is necessary for this. Pencils and paper will be needed for the buzz groups.

Use some variety in the program now by having a different person give the meditation. And someone else should lead the Prayer Thought. During the silent prayers, give time between each prayer suggestion for leaguers to gather their thoughts and from flash prayers.

The project has been suggested with the idea of making Christmas more meaningful in the home, whether it be the home of the leaguers or shut-ins. Perhaps you can think of other projects you would like to do. Make sure when the meeting is over that everyone has a copy of the Bible references (if he doesn't have a tree to take home).

EARLY ACTIVITIES

As the group arrives have them participate in one (or both) of these two activities. (a) Gather around the piano for informal group singing of Advent carols. (b) Distribute paper and pencils to the leaguers and ask them to jot down everything that comes to their minds at the mention of the word *Christmas*.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Gather the group together. Ask leaguers to share the items they wrote down in the Early Activities. Make a list on the board.

Many of these things take away from the spiritual meaning of Christmas. But see if you can't discover in each some note of the real Christmas. Ask the group to give suggestions of ways in which the Christmas spirit can or cannot be in these items. Here are a few ideas with which to start:

GIFTS remind us of God's gift that first Christmas and the fact that He gives gifts to us continually.

CHRISTMAS SHOPPERS remind us that even though many of these people are forgetting the true meaning of Christmas, all of this—the rush, the decorations, the shopping—has been caused by the birth of one Baby. (This can be an inspiration for me if I stop in the middle of a store to think about it.)

CARDS, if sent in the real Christmas spirit, remind us to wish the best for our friends, and gives them a token of our Christian love.

FOUR BUZZ GROUPS

Divide into four buzz groups to discuss the following four questions: (1) What is implied when a person says, "Are you ready for Christmas?" What should it mean? (2) Why do some people say, "I'll be glad when Christmas is over!"? What can be done to change this attitude? (3) Describe what happens in every town, store, and city, between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Give examples of the secular and the religious. (4) Are there any special ways you celebrate Christmas in your home which help keep it Christ-centered?

Allow five or ten minutes for the buzz group. Then return to the original large group and give reports. Make these short.

MEDITATION

Stop, look, and listen! *Stop* for a minute to *look* at the trees and their tinsel, the wreaths of holly, the stacks of Christmas cards, and *listen* to the sound of the bells, voices raised in gay carols, and the soft chimes of the organ on Christmas Eve.

What's all this about? What does Christmas mean to you? Take inventory of yourself. What have you made out of Christmas, 1957? Is the deep spiritual truth in your heart? Or is this just another celebration?

Let's change all of this right now! Let's make Christmas, 1957, a time of rebirth. Determine to get real meaning out of the holiday this year. And share

this meaning with others.

Start with preparation. How much time have you spent, and will you spend, getting cards ready, buying and wrapping gifts, and decorating your home? If you're giving that much time for preparation for these unimportant things, think how much time you should give in preparation for the really important thing—the Gift of God.

Determine now to prepare yourself for the blessed Advent of Christ, the Son of God. Spend more time at church services, reading your Bible, praying, thinking about that first Christmas, and sharing with others the Good News.

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast increased its joy; they rejoice before thee as with joy at the harvest . . . For to us a child is born, to us a son is given . . ."

PRAYER THOUGHT

Dr. Frank Laubach, the world famous missionary who has worked in 91 countries developing literacy programs, says that one thing we can and must do to prevent our world from being blown up is to send flash prayers out to every person we see, think, or read about. In this

way the entire earth can be enveloped in the gentle but bright light of Christian love, faith, and understanding.

Let us bow our heads now and send out our silent flash prayers. For our family—for our community—for our pastor—a prayer of thanks to God for His Christmas Gift—and a prayer for ourselves.

PROJECT

The project is designed for the leaguers' use in their own homes, or for gifts for the shut-ins and aged of the church.

You will need small Christmas trees, 12 or 18 inches high. Use real ones, artificial ones, or make your own. You can make your own out of aluminum electric fence wire, wood, papier mache, and green paint. You may want to sprinkle some glitter on your trees.

Make ornaments out of smooth, light-colored art paper. On one side print the statements and questions about light. On the other side, write the Bible references. (These are found at the end of the topic.)

Other projects could be a result of this topic. You may want to make an altar cloth or a triptych for family worship. Some may plan a prayer calendar or mimeograph a devotional guide for families of the church.

BIBLE REFERENCES

- God wants us to have light. He made it. Genesis 1:3-5
- What is the most important light for us? Psalm 27:1
- What can we ask God to do with this light? Psalm 43:3
- Who may receive this light? Psalm 112:4
- Can we count on this light even in darkest trouble? Psalm 139:11-12
- Is there light for those who ignore God and seek earth's pleasures? Isaiah 8:22
- If we believe, what will Christ's birth do for us? Isaiah 9:2
- What is God's promise and purpose in sending Christ? Isaiah 42:6, 7
- What is Christ's promise? John 8:12
- How urgent is it that we follow this light immediately? John 12:35, 36
- What effect does the light have on me? Matthew 5:14-16

Best wishes for a very blessed and holy Christmas
and
a most successful New Year

Echoes

Have you begun plans for Advent wreath services in league or in your church? You will find these services are a real inspiration.

Organize a committee to plan the services, one to make the wreath and freshen it every week, and another group to be in charge of the services.

Planning the Service

Back issues of *Luther Life* and *HIGH IDEALS* will give you some ideas with which to start. A Bible index will guide you to Old Testament prophecies of Christ.

The candle on the wreath may be lighted at the beginning of the worship or during the worship. Whatever method you plan to use should be observed for the four services.

The service should be simple and fairly brief. Hymns, Scripture, poetry, records, and a short meditation are the parts of the service.

There is quite a variety of themes from which to choose. Don't use the same old idea year after year. I remember a service based on Old Testament prophecy and the fulfillment from the New Testament. Another group used a hymn for its theme and developed all the services on the stanzas of that hymn. One of the most inspirational Advent wreath themes was based on the time, the persons, and the place involved in the Christmas story. The final service tied all these together in John 3:16.

Making the Wreath

Just as there is variety in themes for the services, there is variety in types of wreaths you can use. Choose one to meet your needs.

If everyone sits in a circle around the central wreath, you may want the wreath on a low, round table. Use plastic foam as the base. You can cut holes in this in which you can place the candles. And it is easy to stick pine in the foam.

A wreath may hang from a Chandelier or may rest on a sturdy board fastened horizontally against the wall. This wreath can be made from a coat hanger or wood.

From week to week the pine will dry. This makes a shabby-looking wreath. And it causes a fire hazard because of the candles. Freshen the pine daily by sprinkling water on it or change the pine before each service. Keep an eye on the candles. Don't let them get so low that the flames begin licking at the pine.

Leading the Service

The services should not be of a formal, liturgical nature. But they must be led with stateliness. Especially the lighting of the Advent candle calls for inspirational dignity.

If possible, prepare small mimeographed programs. No announcing is preferable. Any announcements take away from the mood of the service.

Soft music before and after the service is a must. Or some dramatical number such as a recording of one of the arias or a chorus from Handel's *Messiah*.

Another excellent place to use the Advent wreath is in the home. Make a wreath for your home and plan your own services so that Christmas will take on a new meaning in your family this year.

THE LUTHER LEAGUE OF AMERICA

228 SPRUCE STREET

PHILADELPHIA 7, PENNSYLVANIA

Executive Staff

Executive Secretary

THE REV. LESLIE CONRAD, JR.

Associate Secretaries

THE REV. ARTHUR O. F. BAUER

THE REV. PHILIP R. HOH

Del.; RAY UEBERROTH, Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pa.; TOM WOLD, 922 Candelaria Rd., N.W., Albuquerque, N. Mex.; MALCOLM MINNICK, JR., Immediate Past President, 4202 Main St., Columbia, S. C.

TERM 1957-61

DAVID L. ANGERSBACH, Pacific Seminary, Berkeley, Calif.; THE REV. DAVID R. GERBERDING, 54 N. Prospect St., Akron 4, Ohio; GEORGE TAYLOR, JR., Midland College, Fremont, Nebr.; ROBERT WALTERS, Chicago Seminary, Maywood, Ill.; FRED WEDEMEYER, Mt. Airy Seminary, Philadelphia 19, Pa.

Executive Committee

Officers

UDY FORD President

Lenoir Rhyne College, Hickory, N. C.

ROBERT MENGES Vice President

Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pa.

SUE CULP Secretary

P.O. Box 22, Albemarle, N. C.

ARNOLD TIEMEYER Treasurer

Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio

Division Chairman

ROBERT WALTERS, Christian Vocation
Chicago Seminary, Maywood, Ill.

MARTHA DIANA, Evangelism
191 Oak St., Manchester, Conn.

JOYCE JOHNSON, Missions
3429 - 32nd Ave., S., Minneapolis 6, Minn.

GEORGE TAYLOR, JR., Social Action
Midland College, Fremont, Nebr.

Members-at-Large

TERM 1955-59

FLORENCE FRAY, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.; J. LUTHER MAUNEY, JR., Roanoke College, Salem, Va.; THE REV. ROBERT E. NEUMEYER, 6th and Jackson Sts., Wilmington,

OUR WRITERS

MRS. ROBERT BAKER (p. 5) is congregational youth advisor at St. Peter's Church, Lancaster, Ohio; VINCENT EDWARDS (p. 8) is a free lance writer from Poughkeepsie, N.Y.; MRS. WILLIAM MARTIN (p. 45), former parish worker in Philadelphia, now is a housewife in Dresher, Pa.; ELIZABETH J. MILLER (p. 32), an active leaguer from Hungerford, Pa., who is a junior at Gettysburg College, plans her future in religious journalism; MRS. GEORGE NESBITT (p. 36) is a parish worker at Atonement Church, Wyomissing, Pa.; DR. JOHN SCHMIDT (p. 28) is pastor of Indianola Church, Columbus, Ohio; BETTY SWINEHART (p. 25) is parish deaconess at St. Peter's, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada; SALLY ANN TSCHUMI (p. 16) is parish deaconess at Augsburg Church, Toledo, Ohio; DAVE ULLERY (p. 40) is a rising middle at Hama Divinity School, Springfield, Ohio; ALBERT A. ZIMMER (p. 13) is professor of education and teacher training at Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, Pa.

WINTER 1958

Look for these features *

* HIGH IDEALS Index

* Information for Pen Pals

* 13 Topics

* Echoes

C
Dr. Charles B. Foelsch
2750 Marin Ave.
Berkeley 8, Calif.